00033071

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016

33071
ac

A

JOURNEY

FROM

BENGAL TO ENGLAND,

THROUGH

THE NORTHERN PART OF INDIA,
KASHMIRE, AFGHANISTAN, AND PERSIA, AND
INTO RUSSIA, BY THE CASPIAN-SEA.

BY GEORGE FORSTER,

IN THE CIVIL SERVICE OF

THE HONOURABLE THE EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR R. FAULDER, NEW BOND-STREET.

1798.

00033071

CONTENTS

OF THE

FIRST VOLUME.

A ROUTE FROM CALCUTTA TO KASHMIRE.

SKETCHES OF THE HINDOO MYTHOLOGY,

ABBREVIATED HISTORY OF THE ROHILAHS, SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH, AND THE SICQUES.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

EARL CORNWALLIS,

KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE ORDER OF THE GARTER; ONE OF HIS BRITANNICK MAJESTY'S HONOURABLE PRIVY COUNCIL; LIEUTENANT-GENERAL OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES; GOVERNOR-GENERAL AND COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF ALL THE POSSESSIONS AND FORCES OF HIS BRITANNICK MAJESTY, AND OF THE HONOURABLE THE UNITED COMPANY OF MERCHANTS OF ENGLAND, IN THE EAST-INDIES, *&c. &c. &c.*

MY LORD,

DEDICATORY praiſe hath ever been ſuſpected of ſincerity; and paſſes, indeed, among men of the world, as a ſtrain of turgid language, deſigned to court favour, ſooth the vanity of a patron, or — in its beſt ſenſe, to expreſs the haſty dictates of gratitude. — Yet, I have the con-

fidence

fidence to hope, that the tenor of this dedication will deſerve a leſs ſevere cenſure, and that it will be even ſaid, I have narrowed the limits of my ſubject.

When I had reſolved to intrude my book of Travels on the notice of the public, I naturally looked around, being an unknown author, for ſome name, to give it a ſanction; not the ſanction of wealth or grandeur; for they are not always the criterion of worth: but that which was to be obtained from the man, who ſtood eminent for the qualities which moſt eſſentially contribute to the honour and welfare of his country.

The object of this ſearch, which does not croſs the eye at every glance, was ſeen with pleaſure; and though the uſes derived from it may be deemed preſumptuous, I could not reſiſt the deſire of fixing ſo bright an ornament to my work; and of offering however ſlender, my tribute of applauſe to actions, which demand a diſtinguiſhed page in the annals of our nation.

Ill Fortune, which from the day of ancient Rome,

Rome, has been ordinarily followed by neglect, obſcurity, and oftentimes diſgrace, opened a more extenſive field for the diſplay of Your Lordship's endowments; and like the blaſts of Winter on the rooted oak, hold out honourable teſtimony of ſuperior ſtrength.

In the Eaſtern world, Your Lordship has been oppoſed to an enemy far more formidable, — the poſſeſſion of a power never before exerciſed by a Britiſh ſubject; not even committed to the firſt magiſtrate of our ſtate; and which extends over a ſpacious region, a numerous and wealthy people. Yet, far removed from controul, in a land whoſe every principle of government is actuated by a rapacious avarice, whoſe people never approach the gate of authority without an offering, we have ſeen, and with wonder, the inflexible maintainance of an integrity, only to be be equalled by a temperate uſe of command.

But, panegyrick being the leaſt grateful where it is the moſt due, I will cloſe this addreſs, with a zealous wiſh, that Your Lordship may yet con-

continue to govern the Britiſh dominion in India, and complete the work that already hath aſſumed ſo fair an aſpect. The ſacrifice is great, but the reward is ſtill greater; it will reach beyond the ſovereign's bounty, or the peoples praiſe.

I have the Honour to be,

With the moſt profound reſpect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's

Moſt devoted,

And moſt obedient

humble Servant,

GEORGE FORSTER.

Calcutta,
Auguſt the 1ſt, 1790.

PREFACE

BOOKS of Voyages and Travels having been ever held in eſtimation, and indulgently received, I am the leſs fearful of ſubmitting the following volume to the notice of the public. A knowledge of the manners of different nations qualifies domeſtic prejudice, and enlightens the mind; but the ſubjects of Britain derive from it a ſingular benefit; they ſee through a compariſon that communicates a fond pleaſure to the heart, the unrivaled excellency of their laws, conſtitution and government; they ſee theſe rare gifts brightly reflected on their national character, which ſtill avowedly maintains its pre-eminence amongſt the nations of the European world. Were a man to form a judgment of the bias of

his own genius and diſpoſition, (on the merits of which he is, perhaps the leaſt qualified to decide, (I would unreſervedly ſay, that in the courſe of my journey, I felt no impulſe of partiality for any ſect or body of men. It is of ſerious concern to *letters*, that many a man of genius and ſcience has fixed a diſcredit on his works, by a wilful adherence to ſome favourite ſyſtem, which alluring to its ſtandard a various train of affections, and ideas, he becomes involuntarily incited to ſacrifice to it the principles of truth and reaſon.

TRAVELLERS ſtand accuſed, even, on proverbial authority, of adopting a figurative and looſe ſtyle of deſcription; and as I have been thrown into tracks, removed from the eye of European obſervation, I am prompted to earneſtly ſolicit the confidence of the public in behalf of this work, and to ſay, that however vitiated by the errors of judgment, it has no tendency to diſcolour or miſrepreſent truth. The curſory diſſertation on the former and preſent ſtate of Bengal, may have ſome claim to favour, from the conſideration that I viſited that province in the deſcription of a paſſenger;

through

though but a ſmall portion of local knowledge might have been acquired, eſſential advantages aroſe from this temporary reſidence.

GUIDED by no views of intereſt, nor impreſſed by any frown of power, I was enabled to examine the objects that came before me through a diſpaſſionate medium.

THE letter on the mythology of the Hindoos, ſome copies of which were publiſhed in 1785, has been corrected ſince my return to India; but from the various intricacy of the ſubject, I am apprehenſive it may yet contain errors and apparent inconſiſtencies. Inveſtigations of the religious ceremonies and cuſtoms of the Hindoos, written in the Carnatic, and in the Punjab, would in many examples widely differ; yet the Hindoo religion, in all parts of India, ſtand on a common baſis; nor does the vaſt ſuperſtructure, when the view is inſpected with attention, eſſentially differ in its compartments. The oſtenſible diſſimilarity ariſes, perhaps from the manners of the ſame people, varying in Northern and Southern regions. A native of the lower Carnatic is mild,

temperate, and generally timid; he performs the ordinances of his religion with a zealous and ſcrupulous attention; and the bramin of that country, with many of the other ſects, is confined ſtrictly to the uſe of vegetable diet. How ſtrong the contraſt appears in the inhabitant of the Punjab; thoſe even of domeſtic and laborious profeſſions, are brave, daring, and often cruel. Bramins are the uſual ſoldiers of the country, many of whom eat fleſh meat; and they never leave their home, even when not employed in military ſervice, without weapons of offence. The merchants and mechanicks, when they go but a few miles abroad, are all ſtrongly armed; and in ſome of the Northern provinces, particularly in Bundilcund, the huſbandmen carry a ſpear into the field they are cultivating. This difference of diſpoſition has produced oppoſite manners in the ſame tribes of people, as well as oppoſite cuſtoms, which if not attentively inveſtigated, would afford a ſpecious belief, that the inhabitants of the North and South of India were not connected by any national relation.

I HAVE to expreſs with pleaſure, great obligations to Colonel

Colonel Polier, of the Honourable Company's ſervice, for having furniſhed me with large hiſtorical tracts of the Sicques, and of the life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. On every application to that gentleman for other information of Indian hiſtory, his papers and opinions have been liberally ſupplied. I am alſo much indebted to Mr. Briſtow, of Bengal, for a valuable manuſcript memoir of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, from which I have extracted curious and uſeful matter. The prefixed chart of the road, calculated according to the reckoning of my journal, was conſtructed by Mr. Wilford, of the Bengal corps of engineers, a gentleman of extenſive geographical knowledge.

Science can receive but a ſlender aid from the materials of the following work. The manner in which I travelled, precluded the uſe of any inſtrument to aſcertain the diſtance and bearings. The one I noted from obſerving the courſe of the ſun; the other is agreeable to the common computation of the country, which is not often found widely erroneous. My limited knowledge of botany prevents, alſo, any accurate deſcription of various

claſſes

claſſes of trees and plants, which I ſaw in Kaſhmire and Perſia. But the natural productions of thoſe countries have been ſo ſcientifically treated by Chardin, Le Bruyn, and Bernier, that my inability will be the leſs ſenſibly felt.

FORSTER'S TRAVELS.

LETTER I.

Benares, 31ſt Auguſt, 1782.

DEAR SIR,

HAVING reſolved on viſiting Benares, that I might, there, indulge, for a ſhort time, an inveſtigation into the mythology of the Hindoos, I procured permiſſion to proceed to that city; and, as you may receive ſome amuſement from the relation of my journey, with the obſervations that occurred, I will lay it before you; intreating, that you will make the neceſſary allowance for a ſtranger*, who, though his remarks, and the con-

* The author is a civil ſervant on the Madras eſtabliſhment.

cluſions drawn, may partake of errors, will not, premeditatedly, diſcolour the truth.

On the 23d of May, I left Calcutta, and on the next day arrived at Sookſagur, a valuable and riſing plantation, the property of Meſſrs. Croſts and Lennox. Theſe gentlemen have eſtabliſhed, at this place, a fabrication of white cloth, of which the Company provide an annual inveſtment, of about two lacks of rupees. They have alſo, founded a raw ſilk manufactory, which, as it bears the appearance of increaſe and improvement, will, I hope, reward the induſtrious and eſtimable labours of it's proprietors. In this plantation, a large quantity of ſpirituous liquor is made, reſembling, in an inferior degree, the American rum, which, ſince the commencement of the Dutch war, has become in great demand. Being applied to all the uſes of the Batavia arrack, a conſiderable benefit is expected to ariſe to the Bengal province, from a current ſale of this commodity. In juſtice to thoſe who enrich their country by an introduction of valuable manufactures, the Government is called upon to yield them every protection, and grant them every fair indulgence; it is, likewiſe, the duty of the man of obſervation, to circulate the ſucceſs of ſuch works, that an emulation may warm the breaſts of his fellow citizens, and that thoſe who project them, may receive the tribute of applauſe, due to genius and induſtry. It muſt not be omitted that this new eſtabliſhment, hath been noticed by the particular attention of the Government of Bengal, which, on many other occaſions, has evinced

evinced a zealous diſpoſition, in encouraging and promoting uſeful undertakings.

THE Engliſh ſhould no longer account themſelves ſojourners in this country; they are now, virtually, it's lords paramount, and their policy ſhould not be that of a day; but, conſidering the opulence and wealth of the ſubject as cloſely tending to enrich the common ſtate, they ſhould, at large, ſupport his wants, and encourage his labours. A conduct equally wiſe and profitable, would conduce to the increaſe of public, and private, proſperity, and operate as a compenſatory retribution for ſome actions, which cannot bear the teſt of inveſtigation; and which have, already, involved the national character in diſgrace. In touching on this ſubject, I am neceſſarily led into reflections on the commerce of Bengal, interior and foreign, and on the common want of ſpecie, throughout the province.

PREVIOUSLY to the æra in which the Engliſh became poſſeſſed of Bengal, the different nations who viſited it were obliged to give ſpecie for the greateſt portion of the commodities they purchaſed; there being but a ſmall proportion of articles taken in barter by the natives. This ſpecies of commerce, ſo lucrative to India, and which muſt have depoſited a large amount of gold and ſilver, continued for upwards of a century and an half. But, after the Engliſh Government was eſtabliſhed in Bengal, the neceſſity of this commercial ſyſtem no longer exiſted; the amount of the revenues became ſufficient to purchaſe the cargoes of the country, and to

defray the public expenditures: here, one channel of the influx of ſpecie into Bengal was ſtopped, and it will be found, alſo, that the revolutions, which in that quarter, advanced the fortunes of the Engliſh, have materially leſſened the like imports of the other European nations, who traded to Bengal. For, excluſively of finding a current ſale for their commodities, they have been enabled to procure, from the Engliſh, large ſums of money, for bills on Europe. An important change has been alſo effected on the interior commerce of Bengal, by the extinction of the Mahometan dominion.

The native princes, and chiefs of a various deſcription, the retainers of numerous dependants, afforded a conſtant employment to a vaſt number of ingenious manufacturers, who ſupplied their maſters with gold and ſilver ſtuffs, curiouſly flowered, plain muſlins, a diverſity of beautiful ſilks, and other articles of Aſiatic luxury; the uſe of which, wealth, and a propenſity to a voluptuous life, naturally excited. Theſe Mahometan, or Hindoo, chiefs, have either been removed, or being no longer poſſeſſed of their former reſource, have fallen into poverty and decay; and the artizans, who had been ſupported in their profeſſions by theſe powerful and wealthy maſters, were, on their expulſion, obliged, from a want of ſubſiſtence, to quit their profeſſions, or the country. Hence, many branches of rare manufacture, evidently declined; and ſome of the moſt precious are now no longer known. The diſtracted and impoveriſhed condition of the Moghul and Perſian empires, hath contributed,

tributed, conſiderably, to leſſen the great demand which was made by thoſe ſtates, for the produce of Bengal, when Dehli and Iſpahan enjoyed reigns of grandeur and vigour. When it is conſidered, that the Moghul court, whether in it's ſplendour or wealth, exceeded that of all other nations; that the numerous governors, interſperſed throughout the provinces, adopted the manners of ſovereign princes and that all their more luxurious articles of dreſs were fabricated in Bengal; we muſt conclude, that the diſcontinuation of ſuch a traffic has produced ſtrong effects. In deſcribing this commercial event, which has brought an evident change in the quality of the trade of Bengal, I am not authorized, by any ſpecific knowledge, to ſay, that a general injury has been felt by the country; perhaps, the loſſes which have been ſuſtained are counterpoiſed by the augmentation of the cargoes, though of a different ſpecies, which are now tranſported, annually, to Europe.

HAVING already noticed the large influx of European ſpecie, or bullion, in this country, and the cauſe of the ceſſation of this traffic, I will offer ſome deſultory ſentiments, on the ſubject of the diminution of the coin in Bengal, of which, grevious complaints have long exiſted. During the Mahometan adminiſtration, private wealth was uſually expended on the ſpot where it had been acquired; and though ſeverity and oppreſſion might have been exerciſed in the accumulation, yet, by it's quick circulation, through the many channels of luxury, the country at large was improved and embelliſhed, without any decreaſe of the general currency. It

may

may be urged, that the expenditure of Europeans, in their public and private buildings, has, adequately, ſupplied the wants of the artizan and labourer. But, I am led to hazard an opinion, that this amount falls much ſhort of that applied by the preceding princes to the conſtruction of moſques, baths, Hindoo temples, grand reſervoirs of water, ſpacious gardens, together with a variety of coſtly private edifices. Theſe modes of expence are neither adapted to the genius, or inclination, of Europeans, who have no religious paſſion to gratify, nor are they impelled, by patriot zeal, to raiſe monuments of grandeur in India; but holding themſelves the moveable tenants of the day, they are eager to reach their native home, that they may there enjoy the fruits of their labour.

As the remittance of Engliſh property to Europe could not be ſufficiently attained, by means of public bills, the ſervants of the Company, and private merchants, have been often driven to the neceſſity of exporting ſpecie, though ſuch a medium be attended with heavy loſs; or they are induced to throw their caſh into foreign funds, whereby their enemies, or at leaſt, their rivals, are enriched. The injurious tendency of this limitation of public remittance, having been ſo ſeverely felt, and repeatedly repreſented to the ſuperior Government in England, it is to be expected that the channel of conveying property from India, will be opened in ſo efficient a manner, that the neceſſity of purſuing, in future the deſtructive alternative of exporting gold and ſilver, or employing foreign agents, will be, wholly, obviated. As the private caſh taken up in India

ia will be inveſted in Indian produce, and ſent to Europe, for expreſs purpoſe of diſcharging the bills drawn; the poſition is ar, excepting in the event of unforeſeen calamity, that the ſales he cargoes, in Europe, will enable the Eaſt India Company to harge the requiſite payments. In teſtimony of the vaſt inherent ource of Bengal, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that the wealth of this rovince, which has ſupported, by its millions, the Coromandel and Malabar coaſts, foreign and domeſtic wars, and the trade of China and Bencoolen, muſt have been accumulated in the ſpace of ſixty or ſeventy years.

FROM the period of Arungzebe's death,* until nearly the date of our territorial eſtabliſhments in India, when the Moghul Empire ſtill preſerved a large poſſeſſion of its power, the balance of the revenues of Bengal, was punctually conveyed, in ſpecie and † Bills, to the Imperial treaſury. The remittance of this amount has been known to cauſe ſo great a ſcarcity of money, that many perſons, poſſeſſed of even large property, have incurred difficulties, in defraying their domeſtic expences. Though the maritime commerce of Bengal does not maintain the vigor which accompanied it, whilſt the Europeans were confined to the coaſts of India, and exerciſed ſimply the profeſſion of merchants, a briſk and important trade is yet carried on at Calcutta. The advantageous traffic that ſub-

* This Prince died, A. D. 1707.

† A crore of rupees, or million ſterling, has been ſent in the courſe of one year from Bengal to Delhi.

ſiſted

ſiſted formerly between this port and Pegue, Siam, and the Ma iſlands, now feebly remains; and, unleſs ſome favourable change ſpeedily effected, bears the appearance of a total failure. Thou theſe branches of commerce, ſilver bullion, gold-duſt and preci ſtones, were introduced into Bengal; from whence, in ret raw and wrought ſilks, coarſe cotton cloths, opium, and ſalt pet were exported. It hath alſo been alledged, that, within theſe lat years, the maritime trade of Bengal has received a check from an embargo, or, what is tantamount, an exceſſive high duty laid on the importation of foreign ſalt. This reſtriction has reduced the number of ſhips, and leſſened the conſiderable exportation of grain, which, before that period, annually took place at the port of Calcutta: yet, though it may have injured the exterior commerce, the revenue of the Ganges ſalt has been increaſed, by this reſtriction, to an amount never produced at any former period. It is painful, perhaps not juſt, to expatiate on the defects, or the misfortunes of a country, and hold them out to public view; without propoſing remedies for the ills that are exhibited. The ſcantineſs of my local knowledge, will only permit me to ſay, that as the welfare of the Britiſh dominion in India, ultimately depends on the proſperity of Bengal, no labour ſhould be thought irkſome, no rational plan left untried, which may improve its revenne, or encourage its trade.

On the 29th of May I arrived at Berhampore. In this cantonment, which is large and commodious, are ſtationed three regiments of ſepoys, and a battalion of Europeans. On the 15th of June,

June, made an excurſion to Moorſhedabad, and it's environs, that I might view the theatre on which thoſe intereſting ſchemes had been agitated, which, after a ſeries of intrigue and blood-ſhed, advanced the Engliſh to the dominion of a wealthy kingdom.

At the diſtance of a mile below the city, and on the oppoſite bank of the river, ſtands the burying place of Ali Verdy Khan, known alſo in India by the name of Mahobut Jung; a man, who, by his abilities as a ſoldier and a ſtateſman, raiſed himſelf from a private condition, to the Subahdarry of Bengal. He maintained an obſtinate war with the Mahrattas, for the ſpace of eight years, and was, after an obſtinate ſtruggle, obliged to cede to them the diſtricts of Kuttack.

Not far from the tomb of Mahobut Jung, lies interred his nephew, Seraje-ud-Dowlah, well known in Engliſh hiſtory, by his capture of Fort William, and atrocious conduct, confining the unfortunate garriſon in a cloſe dungeon; where moſt of them died from the ſeverity of their ſituation. The fate of this young man was ſimilar to that of many an Eaſtern Prince; of ſuch, eſpecially, who experience a reverſe of fortune.—Seraje-ud-Dowlah was betrayed by Meer Jaffier, at the battle of Plaſſey, and aſſaſſinated a ſhort time after, by his order. Were the conduct of Meer Jaffier to be tried by the law of natural affections, or by the rules of private honor, it muſt appear tainted with a die of deep hue. Mahobut Jung, thinking to ſecure to his ſucceſſor the attachment of Meer Jaffier, beſtowed on this officer, the higheſt office of Government,

with his ſiſter in marriage; and on his death bed, in the moſt earneſt manner, delivered the young Nabob to his tutelage and protection. Mahobut Jung ſhould have known, from ſucceſsful experience,* that no ties are ſufficiently coercive to reſtrain the wild force of ambition; particularly that ſpecies of it found in an Aſiatic breaſt, which is ſeen to break down every fence.

The Mollahs, who are employed here to offer up their prayers for the dead, ſaid, that the widow of Seraje-ud-Dowlah, frequently comes to this mauſoleum, and performs certain ceremonies of mourning, in memory of her deceaſed huſband. Mooreſhedabad, which now bears the various marks of poverty and decay, an evident reſult of the removal of the ſeat of Government, is a city of no old date; as the reſidence of the ſubahs of Bengal, who, not [illegible] years ago, kept their court at Rajah Mhal, about one hundred miles further up the river. The preſent Subahdar, Mubarick-ud-Dowlah, grandſon of Meer Jaffier, and [illegible] the Nabob Mirun, who was ſaid to have been killed by lightening, receives an annual ſtipend of ſixteen lacks of rupees, from the Company's treaſury: having never been veſted with the power, or poſſeſſed of an aſpiring temper, he is the leſs reſtleſs, in his preſent ſituation. As the Britiſh nation, in the acquiſition of their poſſeſſions in Bengal, have been materially aided, by the family of Mubarick-ud-Dowlah, they ſhould not, from any narrow ſcheme of œconomy, recede

* He had made a ſucceſsful uſe, in his attainment of power, of the various inſtruments of intrigue and treachery.

from

from their engagements with this prince, who, though flattered by the moſt indulgent attention, muſt ſtill have mortifying moments, unleſs he is wholly bereft of the ſenſe of feeling, or the faculty of reflection. No buildings of note are ſeen in the city of Mooreſhedabad: that which moſt attracts the attention, is the cemetery of Meer Jaffier, his begum, and the Nabob Mherun :* few things are more efficacious, in repreſſing or mocking vanity, of which affection ſo ample a ſhare has fallen to our lot, than, diſpaſſionately, to view the repoſitory of thoſe who in their lives have been termed great men, who, "before they ſhuffled off this mortal coil," inflamed by pride, avarice, ambition, thought empires too narrow for their ſcope, and that mankind were only created to become the inſtruments of their mad deſires: theſe once towering creatures, are now, per force, lodged in very moderate apartments, where their turbulent ſchemes ſleep in quiet, and their names are often buried in their aſhes.—A tomb is one of thoſe few appendages of a great man, in the poſſeſſion of which none envy him.

On the 23d of June, I embarked in a boat at Mooreſhedabad, and with a freſh eaſterly wind, ſailed up the river about 30 miles. The boatmen, generally Hindoos, faſten the boat to the ſhore in the evening, that they may eat and refreſh themſelves; it not being the uſage of their ſect to prepare victuals on the water.

* I have been alſo informed that Mherun was interred at Rajemhal. It is not uſual among the Mahometans to erect cenotaphs.

24th.—I ſaw the village of Jungypore on the eaſtern ſhore, where the Company have eſtabliſhed a factory, for the manufacture of raw-ſilk. This day our courſe was about twenty miles.

25th.—Entered the main branch of the Ganges:—here the river affords a ſpacious view, which is terminated, at the extremity of a long reach, by a viſta of the hills above Rajah Mhal, extending, in a regular chain, to the north-weſt. The Ganges, which at Sooty,* is full four miles acroſs, was that day roughly agitated by a ſtrong wind, which heaving the waters into a ſhort breaking wave, gave it the appearance of an arm of the ſea. The riches of Bengal, with a large portion of the conveniency of it's inhabitants, are, in an eſſential degree, derived from this river, which, with its numerous branches flowing through and interſecting an extenſive ſpace of country, tranſports ſpeedily, and at a moderate expence, the various products or nutricts, towns, and villages, to places, where they are immediately conſumed, or collected for the ſupply of more diſtant marts. The Ganges alſo affords a grand aid to the Engliſh, in all military operations within their own territory; whilſt their armies on the Coromandel and Malabar Coaſts, are, from a want of proviſions and ammunition, cramped and impeded in their motions; and are frequently, for the obtainment of theſe ſupplies, compelled to retreat, on the moment of reaping the full fruits of victory. But, the Bengal armaments are furniſhed, from their ſtore boats,

* A village near the head of the Caſſimbazar river.

with

with every equipment; and the Europeans enjoy, in their camps, even the luxuries of life.

In the evening, arrived at Rajah Mhal, a former reſidence of ſome of the Bengal ſubahdars. Ali Verdy Khan, in the beginning of his adminiſtration, which commenced in 1742, removed the ſeat of Government from this place to Mooreſhedabad. I could not learn the cauſe of this preference; although not deficient in enquiry. The natives of India, are not much addicted to curious inveſtigation, and are generally inattentive to the hiſtory of their own country. It would ſeem that their chief happineſs is centered, in enjoying the preſent hour, which abſorbs every retroſpect of the paſt, and care of the future. Their pleaſures are even indolent and languid, and partake of the mild influence of their climate, and the eaſy produce of a fertile ſoil Ali Verdy Khan probably removed his capital to Moorſhedabad, that he might keep a more vigilant watch over the actions of the Engliſh, whom, it was ſaid, he feared; and alſo more conveniently proſecute the war againſt the Mahrattas, who had invaded his country, on the ſide of the Kuttack. Rajah Mhal bears at this day an impoveriſhed aſpect; and were it not for the heaps of ruins interſperſed through the town and its environs, which have now mouldered into a ſtate of deep decay, it would be difficult to diſcover, that this place had been, ſo lately, the principal city of a powerful and opulent chief. Sauntering amongſt the ruined buildings, I ſtrayed into a ſmall garden adjoining the bank of the river; where perceiving an old man,

employed

employed in digging, I entered into a converſation with him. Happening to be more intelligent than the common claſs, and agreeably to the period of his life, very narrative, he afforded me much amuſement in his relation and remarks. This old Cicerone obſerved, that the very ſpot which he was then cultivating, was the ſite of the Nobet Ghah; or the muſic-hall of the old palace; and that within his recollection, a capacious garden had extended in front of his little incloſure, which the Ganges had now ſwept away. The inſtability of the monuments of human grandeur cannot, in any region of the globe, I apprehend, be more faithfully, or more grievouſly exemplified than at Rajah Mhal; yet I muſt exclude from this range of ruins the convenient and hoſpitable houſe of Mr. Cleveland, which formed a part of the Subahdar's palace.

On the 26th, paſſed, with a freſh eaſterly wind, the village of Sickergally, (where a heavy ſwell had nearly overſet the boat) and obſerved near it a neat building, which had been erected by Mr. Cleveland, for the accomodation of paſſengers.

27th.—Saw the town of Pointee, near which, on an eminence, ſtands an Hindoo, or Mahometan manſion; and a moſque, now apparently in diſuſe. Adjacent to theſe buildings, a monument has been raiſed to the memory of a Mr. Middleton, who died there, on his journey to Calcutta: theſe objects would not perhaps deſerve notice, did they not preſent picturesque land-marks.

28th.—the wind being light, and the current ſtrong, the men

were

were obliged to track the boat. Theſe two laſt days we proceeded only about thirty miles. An evident danger is incurred by approaching the banks of the Ganges during the latter ſeaſon of the rain, from their frequently falling, being of great height in many places, and chiefly compoſed of looſe ſoil, the weight of earth deſcending on a boat, would undoubtedly deſtroy it.

29th.—At noon, arrived at Jungherah, a ſmall rocky iſland, on which ſtands a ſeminary of Hindoo mendicants, and on one of the ſides are ſeen ſome figures of very ancient ſculpture. A long line of hills, running from the ſouth-eaſt to the north-weſt, forms here a beautiful termination of a broad range of the river. It has been ſaid, that Seraje-ud-Dowlah was aſſaſſinated at Jungherah, whither he had fled for ſhelter from the purſuit of Meer Jaffier; but it ſhould ſeem more probable, that he was apprehended near this place, and carried to Mooreſhedabad.

This day, obſerved the frame of a well, built of bricks, that ſtood in the middle of the ſtream, with its wall in perfect condition, full fifteen feet above the ſurface of the water. It muſt have pertained to ſome village, bordering on the Ganges; now deſtroyed by the encroachment of it's flood.

Proceeded this day, about 35 miles, and in the evening, ſaw Mongheer, where I arrived the next day. The fort is in a decayed condition, as well as the private buildings, which are uninhabited. The ſituation, which occupies a flat of great extent towards the weſtward, and has the Ganges on the north, is equally well choſen

for

for defence, and conveniency. One of the angle baſtions commands a beautifully winding view of the river, which is cloſed by a range of diſtant hills. It appears that the preſent fort of Mongheer was built by Sultan Shujah, the ſecond ſon of Shah Jehan,* who governed the provinces of Bahar and Bengal, and was held in high eſtimation by the natives, for his liberality and equitable adminiſtration. As ſome relation of Sultan Shujah, (eſpecially of the latter period of his life, which was involved in a ſeries calamity) may excite your attention, and enable me to offer up a tribute of pity to the memory of an unfortunate, but gallant, prince, I will lay it before you, agreeably to the memoirs of M. Bernier, one of the moſt accurate and ingenious writers, on the hiſtory of Hindoſtan.

AFTER the battle of Alhabad, in which he had been worſted, Sultan Shujah retired into the interior parts of Bengal, with his army, where he made a vigorous ſtand againſt the arms of the Emperor.† Bernier ſays, "There remained, now, no other thorn in "the ſide of Aurungzebe, than Sultan Shujah, who ſtill main-"tained himſelf in Bengal; but he was at length forced to yield "to the power and fortune of his brother.

"AMIR Kumla,‡ by the numerous bodies of troops that had

* This Prince cauſed a broad and deep trench to be cut from the river to the hills, very (perceptible traces of which are now to be ſeen) for the more effectual defending this poſt againſt the attack of Aurungzebe's army, which had purſued him from the upper parts of the country.

† Aurungzebe.

‡ The Officer commanding the expedition againſt Sultan Shujah.

"joined

" joined him, was enabled to hem in the army of Sultan Shujah,
" on both ſides of the Ganges, and to compel that prince to ſeek
" refuge at Dacca, a town ſituate on the extremity of Bengal, to-
" wards the ſea ſide; and here, enſues the concluſion of the tragedy.
" The Sultan Shujah, being deſtitute of ſhips to put to ſea, and
" not knowing whither to fly, ſent his eldeſt ſon, Sultan Banque,
" to the King of Racan,* or Mug, who was of Heathen religion,
" to know, whether he might be permitted to take ſhelter in his
" country, for a certain time, and when the monſoon, or periodi-
" cal winds ſhould ſet in, whether he could be furniſhed with a
" veſſel, to carry him to Mecca, from whence he intended paſſing
" into ſome part of Turkey, or Perſia. Sultan Banque returned to
" Dacca, with ſome galleaſſes, manned, with Feringhis, I mean, thoſe
" fugitive Portugueſe chriſtians, who had entered into the ſervice of
" the King of Racan, and were employed in no other buſineſs
" than ravaging the lower parts of Bengal. The young man re-
" porting to his father, that he had been kindly received, and had
" full aſſurances of protection, and aſſiſtance given him; Sultan
" Shujah, with his family, conſiſting of three ſons, daughters, and
" their mother, embarked at Dacca. On their arrival at Racan,
" they were treated with much civility, and provided with ſuch
" neceſſaries, requiſite for their ſubſiſtence, as the country afford-
" ed; in the name of the King. Some months paſs away, the

* More commonly known by the name of Aracan.

" ſeaſon of the favorable winds alſo approach, but no mention is
" made of the veſſel, though the Sultan required it, on no other
" terms than the payment of the hire, for he, yet, wanted not ru-
" pees of gold and ſilver, or gems.—He had, indeed, too great a
" plenty of them, his wealth being, in all appearance, the cauſe of
" his ruin, or at leaſt, contributing much to it. This prince
" might long enough have ſolicited for a ſhip; all was in vain; he
" effected nothing.—On the contrary, the King began to ſhew
" great coldneſs, and to complain of his not coming to ſee him.
" I know not whether Sultan Shujah thought it unworthy of
" himſelf, and too great a condeſcenſion to viſit this King; or
" rather, whether, he feared, that being in the power of their
" chief, his perſon might be ſeized on, for the purpoſe of plunder-
" ing his treaſure, and that he himſelf might be delivered into the
" hands of Amir Kumla, who had offered, in the name of Au-
" rungzebe, large ſums of money, with other conſiderable advan-
" tages, for obtaining the poſſeſſion of this unfortunate family.

" WHATEVER might have been the cauſe, Sultan Shujah did
" not go thither, but ſent his eldeſt ſon; who, on approaching
" the dwelling of the King, began to diſplay his liberality to the
" people, by throwing amongſt them a conſiderable quantity of
" rupees of gold and ſilver, and when he came before the King, he
" preſented him with rich embroideries, and rare pieces of gold-
" ſmith's work, ſet with precious ſtones of great value; excuſing
" at the ſame time, on account of ſome illneſs, his father, in

" whoſe

"whoſe name he had now to entreat, that the ſhip, which had "been promiſed, might be held in readineſs. But, all that the "Prince had done, had not advanced his buſineſs; on the con-"trary, this King, in the courſe of five or ſix days after, made a "demand of one of the daughters of Sultan Shujah, in marriage, "in which the father reſolving never to acquieſce, the King be-"came highly offended.

"Sultan Shujah ſeeing the ſeaſon for ſailing had paſſed away, "and perceiving the ſituation in which he was then placed was a "deſperate one, determined on purſuing equally deſperate mea-"ſures, and undertook the performance of an action, which may "afford a great example of the efforts of deſpair. Although this "King of Racan, in his religion, is a Pagan, there are many "Mahometans, mixed with the people, who have either choſen to "retire amongſt them, or have been enſlaved by the Portugueſe "before mentioned, in their expeditions to the neighbouring "coaſts. Sultan Shujah ſecretly gained theſe men, whom he "joined with two or three hundred of his own own people, the "remainder of thoſe who followed him from Bengal; and with "this force he reſolved to ſurprize the houſe of the King, put his "family to the ſword, and make himſelf ſovereign of the country. "This bold attempt, which reſembled more the enterprize of a "deſperado, than that of a prudent man, yet, had, from the in-"telligence I collected from many Muſſulmen, Portugueſe, and "Hollanders, who were then on the ſpot, a certain feaſibility in

" it. But the day before the blow was to be given, a discovery
" was made of the deſign, which altogether ruined the affairs of
" Sultan Shujah, and involved in it the deſtruction of his family.
" For, after this failure, having no further hope of retrieving his
" fortune, he endeavoured to eſcape into Pegu; a purpoſe, in a
" manner impoſſible to be effected, by reaſon of the vaſt moun-
" tains and foreſts that lay in the way; beſides, they purſued him
" ſo cloſely, that he was overtaken, the ſame day on which he
" fled. It may be well imagined, that Sultan Shujah defended
" himſelf, with the moſt obſtinate courage. The number of Bar-
" barians that fell under his ſword will ſcarcely be credited; but
" at length, overpowered by the multitude of his enemies, he
" was forced to quit the combat. Sultan Banque, who had not
" advanced as far as his father, fought like a lion, until covered
" with the blood of the wounds he received from the ſtones, that
" had been ſhowered upon him from all ſides, he was ſeized on,
" and carried away, with his mother, two young brothers, and
" his ſiſters. All that could be learned of the fate of Sultan Shu-
" jah, himſelf, was, that, accompanied by one woman, an eunuch,
" and two other perſons, he aſcended the top of a mountain;
" that he was wounded on the head with a ſtone, which ſtruck
" him down; but that the eunuch having bound up the wound,
" with his own turban, he aroſe again, and eſcaped into the midſt
" of the woods. This relation I have heard recounted in many
" different ways, by thoſe even that were on the ſpot, which gave

" riſe

"rise to a variety of reports of this Prince, and spread frequent "alarms at the court of Dehli."

THIS writer, after giving a detail of the many conjectures, that were formed of the fate of Sultan Shujah, mentions, that he travelled from Bengal to Masulipatam, with an eunuch of that Prince, and his former commandant of artillery, who told him that Sultan Shujah was dead, but observed a strict reserve in communicating any farther information. Mr. Bernier supposes, that if Sultan Shujah was not slain, on the place of action, he must have died, soon after; falling either into the hands of robbers, or a prey to the wild beasts, with which the forests of that country abound.

SUBSEQUENTLY to this event, the remaining branches of the family were thrown into prison, where they were treated with much rudeness; but after some time, Bernier says, they received a milder treatment, which was chiefly caused by the marriage of the eldest daughter of Sultan Shujah, with the King of Racan. The sequel of this event sets forth, that the servants of the Sultan Banque were discovered in forming another conspiracy, with those Mahometans, who have been already noticed, and that the King being now violently exasperated against this unfortunate family, ordered it to be extirpated; nor did any branch remain, excepting the Princess, whom he had espoused.*

CASSUM

* I have been the more induced to insert this relation of the fate of Sultan Shujah, as it places the conclusion of a curious historical passage, in a point of view, different from

Cassum Ali Khan, in the laſt years of his government, retired to the fort of Mongheer, and actuated by a keen reſentment againſt the Engliſh, for their extenſive encroachments on his authority, and the commerce of his country, he formed the plan of throwing off their yoke, and annihilating their influence in Bengal. In addition to theſe motives, he was urgently incited to the attempt by the officers of his court and army, who were neceſſarily alarmed at the diminution of their power and lucrative appointments. Amongſt the foremoſt of theſe, we find the Armenian Khojah Gregore, who, contrary to the uſage of his country-men, had aſſumed the profeſſion of arms, and had riſen to high rank and confidence, in the ſervice of Caſſum Ali. He ſeems, with Sumroo, to have borne a principal part in the war againſt the Engliſh, which ultimately involved, as is well known, the ruin of Caſſum, and the deſtruction of the Mahometan dominion in Bengal. Gregore alſo loſt his life, for on a ſuſpicion of intriguing with the Armenians of Calcutta he was cut off, previouſly to the expulſion of his maſter. With Caſſum Ali * ended, virtually, the power of the ſubahdars

from that deſcribed by a late writer (Col. Dow) on the Empire of Hindooſtan; who, however well-founded his claims to accuracy, could not have attained the poſſeſſion of more authentic documents, than a perſon, who was himſelf brought forward into the action of the day, and whoſe writings for the ſpace of more than 100 years, have borne the teſt of truth.

* Caſſum Ali Khan, after wandering about the upper provinces, and ſoliciting the aid of various chiefs againſt the Engliſh, ſought protection at the Court of Dehli. He evinced the ſame intriguing and ſanguinary diſpoſition in domeſtic life, as had marked his

ſubahdars of Bengal. Meer Jaffier, in his laſt adminiſtration, made a feeble attempt to reſume his authority, but it ſoon terminated in his death, and in leaving the Engliſh the ſupreme rulers of an extenſive and valuable territory.

I ſhould be ill intitled to a place, even amongſt the moſt trite obſervers, did I not, before I quitted this part of the country, throw my mite into the fund of general applauſe which has been beſtowed on Mr. Cleveland. This gentleman, whom I never ſaw, but whoſe works loudly proclaim his merit, and diffuſe his praiſe, has by an equitable and judicious management of the Rajah Mhal and Bauglepour diſtricts, conſiderably increaſed the number of inhabitants, and improved, as well as facilitated, the collection of the revenue. The increaſe of population is conſpicuouſly ſeen in the dependency of Mongheer, and in the extenſive mercats of that place, which are reſorted to by a concourſe of various traders. He hath alſo made ſtrenuous exertions, in drawing the adjacent Mountaineers, from their faſtneſſes to the plains. Nor have his labours failed of ſucceſs. Twelve hundred of theſe men have entered into our ſervice, and are embodied in a corps, which bears the appearance of becoming uſeful to the ſtate. The indulgent

his public character. He endeavoured, it is ſaid, to ſupplant the Miniſter at Dehli, by an offer of a large donation to the King; and he is accuſed of murdering, at different times, the women he carried with him from Bengal. At his death, which happened at the village of Kutwall, in 1777, the Court ſeized on his eſtate, the value of which was computed at *one thouſand pounds*;—a ſmall reſidue of the plunder of Bengal and Bahar!

treatment

treatment ſhewn them with the ſuperior advantages, which they derive, muſt operate as powerful inducements to their brethren, in following ſo profitable an example. The depredations of theſe people had, at former periods, rendered the paſſage of the roads in that quarter ſo unſafe, that eſcorts were ſtationed at certain poſts, for the protection of travellers; and detachments of two and three battalions, have occaſionally been ſent againſt the ſavage inhabitants of the Bauglepour hills; who are now become the guardians of a country, which they had long waſted, by rapine and bloodſhed.

Mr. Cleveland has eſtabliſhed ſmall buildings, at moſt of the halting places within his diſtricts, for the accommodation of travellers; and the natives of thoſe parts, who ſeem to have profited by the conduct of their chief, are peculiarly attentive to ſtrangers. Such have been the advantages, which the ſtate, and a body of people have derived, from the public ſpirit, and the benevolent efforts of one man! But his reward hath been bounteous and complete. He hath enjoyed the honour of exalting, in a diſtant land, the character of his nation, and felt ſenſations which tranſport the mind beyond the reach of fortune.

On the 3d of July, I left Mongheer; and arrived, on the 5th, at Patna, by water. This city is ſpacious and populous, though much fallen from the importance it held, during the reſidence of the Subahdar of Bahar. The great quantity of poppies cultivated in the contiguous diſtricts, from which opium of an excellent

quality

quality is produced, together with extenſive ſalt-petre works, have rendered Patna opulent, and the center of an extenſive commerce. The different manufactures of ſilver, iron, and wood, are little inferior in this city, to thoſe of Europe; and when the rudeneſs of the tools, with the ſimplicity of the proceſs, is examined, the degree of delicacy which the artiſans have acquired in their ſeveral profeſſions, muſt challenge a high admiration.

The numerous ruins of public and private edifices, ſcattered through the town of Patna, and its environs, indicate a former grandeur and extent, which now no longer exiſt. An ancient name of this place, ſtill known to ſome of the more intelligent inhabitants, and bearing an affinity to that given, by Strabo and Pliny, to the ſuppoſed capital of India, has ſuggeſted an opinion, that Patna occupies the ſituation of the celebrated Palibertha; which is farther ſubſtantiated by the geographical obſervations of Major Rennel.—Curioſity, and the deſire of the moment to indulge a melancholy idea, led me to the ſpot, where the Engliſh were maſſacred by the order of Caſſum Ali. The former buildings are removed, and a well proportioned monument has been erected in commemoration of that dreadful event, though without any inſcription. Perhaps it had been conſiſtent with ſounder policy, that no ſuch memorial had been fixed; but as it was judged expedient to record, thus publicly, an act of treacherous cruelty, the cauſe, I think, ſhould have been explained.

On the 13th of July, I left Patna, and on the ſame day arrived

at Muzufferpour, the reſidence of the Collector of Tirhoot, an extenſive diſtrict, about forty miles to the northward of Patna, and producing a revenue of about ſix and a half lacks of rupees.

In the neighbourhood of Muzufferpour, an action was fought in 1760, between Mherim, the eldeſt ſon of Meer Jaffier, aſſiſted by the Engliſh troops, and Kadim Huſſein Khan, the chief of Purnea, in which the latter was defeated. A few days after the engagement, Mherim died, ſtruck, it was ſaid, by lightening. The father believed that his ſon had been cut off by an aſſaſſin, and he loudly accuſed Caſſum Ali of the murder. The event having removed a ſtrong bar to Caſſum's ambition, and there alſo appearing ſome ſuſpicious circumſtances, attending the alledged cauſe of his death, Meer Jaffier may be juſtified in believing, that his ſon had been taken off, by an avowed rival, who was ſeen at a ſubſequent period, indulging an implacable and ſanguinary temper.

On the 30th of July, croſſed the country, and went to Choprah, a long ſtraggling town, lying on the northern ſide of the Ganges, about twenty miles above Patna. Choprah is the reſidence of the Collector of Sarun and Champoran; diſtricts yielding an annual revenue of fourteen and an half lacks of rupees. The French and Dutch had* factories at this place, chiefly for the purpoſe of manufacturing ſalt-petre, in which commodity this part of

* This letter was written during the war with France and Holland, when theſe places had been captured by the Engliſh.

the

the country profuſely abounds. It is not unworthy of notice to remark, that the Dutch, though obliged to purchaſe the greater portion of their crude ſalt-petre from the Engliſh, were enabled to ſell it in its purified ſtate, at a lower rate than that manufactured by the Engliſh Company, and of a ſuperior quality. This commercial advantage, may be aſcribed to the rigid ſyſtem of œconomy obſerved by the Dutch in all their operations, and to a perſevering attention to buſineſs, with which that people ſeem conſtitutionally endowed.

On the 12th of Auguſt, left Choprah, and on the 17th arrived by water at Buxar. It was in the vicinity of this place that Caſſum Ali, joined by Shujah-ud-Dowlah, with the whole of that Prince's army, made his laſt effort againſt the arms of the Engliſh. The ſuperior numbers of the enemy who crowded the plains of Buxar, availed them little, when oppoſed to the ſmall, but well arranged, and determined body of the Engliſh; who after a ſmart action of two hours, completely routed the combined forces, and captured the whole of their artillery. This action, heretofore ſo amply deſcribed, had not perhaps now been adverted to, but for the impulſe of an earneſt deſire of imprinting anew on your memory, the ſervices performed on that day by the Britiſh troops; to whom their country ſtands indebted for a ſingular exaltation of its fame, and the acquiſition of ſolid benefits.

The fort of Buxar, which, though ſmall, is yet ſufficiently tenable to reſiſt the common attacks of a native power, ſtands

on the exterior limits of the Bahar province. The preſent Commandant has added to the ſtrength of the fort by ſome late improvements; and for a more extenſive protection of the inhabitants of the adjacent town, he has encompaſſed a wide ſpace to the eaſtward of the fortifications, with a rampart and ditch.

The curioſities to be ſeen at Buxar are few, and, excepting one, not worthy of enumeration. But this one, the Hindoos hold in a degree of eſtimation not inferior to that of the Neapolitans for the blood of Saint Januarius, or thoſe of their faith in general for the holy houſe at Loretto. The monument in queſtion, which is erected on a ſmall mount to the weſtward of the fort, is ſacred to the memory of the Gold Ram, who is ſeen occaſionally officiating as the Mars of the Hindoos; and is ſaid to have the direction of war and victory. It would appear, that Ram, whilſt a youth, made a viſit to this eminence, and tarried on it for the ſpace of ſeven days, where he was taught from ſome learned maſter of the ſcience, the art of managing the bow, and wonderful were his feats with this weapon in after times: indeed, were the moſt moderate of them to be recorded, it would be readily admitted without torturing the phraſe, that Ram "drew a long "bow."

At the diſtance of two miles to the weſtward of Buxar, the Torin Nullah, a rivulet which falls into the Ganges, terminates the province of Bahar, and divides it from Benares. Though the Caramnaſſa river, from being of greater note than the Nullah, and

and running contiguous to it, is generally denominated the boundary. In croſſing this river on ſervice, the officers on the Bengal eſtabliſhment become intitled to a double portion of their uſual pay, for the better enabling them to defray the extraordinary expences incurred in countries far diſtant from the ſea coaſts, and where European articles, from the charges of conveyance, ſell at an advanced price.

The view from Buxar into the Benares province, preſents a ſcene of infinite gratification to the ſenſe. You ſee an extended plain ſkirted by a broad winding river, and chequered with exuberant fields of corn, groves of lofty ſpreading trees, and large villages; the whole combines in it ſome of the grandeſt objects in nature, and impreſſes the mind with cheerfulneſs and content.

Left Buxar on the 23d, and arrived on the 26th at Benares, to which city from Mongheer, the diſtance by water is about 280 miles.

In the relation of this ſailing excurſion through the provinces, you will doubtleſs ſee many inaccuracies. You will likewiſe ſee that I have too narrowly circumſcribed the deſcription of a country, which with a fertility that conveys the idea of plenty, and national ſecurity, holds out to the eye, a grand and various ſcope of the moſt beautiful imagery.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER II.

Benares, 30th September, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

HAVING given you a curſory detail of my journey from Calcutta to Benares, with the remarks that occured; I will now lay before you the reſult of my enquiries and obſervations at this place. Should errors ariſe in the inveſtigation of a ſubject, hitherto ſlightly diſcuſſed, and, from its extenſive variety, perplexed and abſtruſe, I muſt entreat an indulgent eye; and though miſtaken in my opinions, I preſume to hope for ſome commendation, were it only for endeavouring to adminiſter a rational pleaſure.

THE city of Benares, for its wealth, coſtly buildings, and the number of its inhabitants, is claſſed in the firſt of thoſe now remaining in the poſſeſſion of the Hindoos. To deſcribe with a due degree of preciſion the various temples dedicated at Benares, to the almoſt innumerable deities, and to explain the origin of their foundation with the neceſſary arrangement, would require a knowledge far ſuperior to mine in the myſterious ſubject of Hindoo Mythology. It is at this day enveloped in ſuch deep

deep obſcurity, that even thoſe pundits the moſt ſkilfully verſed in the Sanſcrit,* are not able to render it moderately comprehenſible to the generality of people.

But as ſome relation of a city ſo famous in Hindooſtan, and now ſo well known in Europe for ſupplying one of the grand ſources of the religious worſhip of the Hindoos, and being the chief repoſitory of the ſcience yet exiſting among them, may not be unacceptable to you, together with a curſory inveſtigation of the Mythology of Brimha; the taſk ſhall be attempted with attention to the object, and, I truſt, with a ſtrict adherence to truth.

At the diſtance of eight miles from the city of Benares, as it is approached on the river, from the eaſtward, the eye is attracted by the view of two lofty minarets, which were erected by Aurungzebe, on the foundation of an ancient Hindoo temple, dedicated to the Mhah Deve. The conſtruction on this ſacred ruin of ſo towering a Mahometan pile, which from its elevated height, ſeems to look down with triumph and exultation on the fallen ſtate of a city ſo profoundly revered by the Hindoos, would appear to have been prompted to the mind of Arungzebe, by a bigotted and intemperate deſire of inſulting their religion. If ſuch was his wiſh, it hath been completely fulfilled. For the Hindoos

* The language in which the ſacred legends of the Hindoos have been preſerved.

conſider

conſider this monument, as the diſgraceful record of a foreign yoke, proclaiming to every ſtranger, that their favorite city has been debaſed, and the worſhip of their gods defiled. From the top of the minarets is ſeen the entire proſpect of Benares, which occupies a ſpace of about two miles and an half along the northern bank of the Ganges, and generally a mile in-land from the river. Many of the houſes, which are remarkably high, ſome of them having ſix and ſeven floors, are built of ſtone, reſembling that ſpecies found in the quarries of Portland,* and which abounds in this part of the country. But the ſtreets where theſe lofty buildings ſtand, are ſo narrow as not to admit of two common carriages abreaſt. In addition to the pernicious effect which muſt proceed from a confined atmoſphere, there is in the hot ſeaſon, an intolerable ſtench ariſing from the many pieces of ſtagnated water diſperſed in different quarters of the town, whoſe waters and borders are appropriated to the neceſſary uſes of the inhabitants. The filth alſo, which is indiſcriminately thrown into the ſtreets, and there left expoſed, (for the Hindoos poſſeſs but a ſmall portion of general cleanlineſs), add to the compound of ill ſmells, ſo offenſive to the European inhabitants of this city. The irregular and compreſſed manner which has been invariably adopted in forming the ſtreets of Benares, has deſtroyed the effects which ſymmetry and arrange-

* The Benares or Chunar-Ghur ſtone, is cloſer grained and deeper coloured, than that of Portland.

ment

ment would have otherwiſe beſtowed on a city, intitled from its valuable buildings, to a preference of any capital which I have ſeen in India.

In my reſearch into the principles of the Hindoo religion, I received great aid from a converſant knowledge of the Marhatta language, and an acquaintance, though very trivial, with the Sanſcrit. The uſe of this laſt tongue, now chiefly confined to a particular ſect of Braminis, who officiate in the character of prieſts, hath ever been made the channel of conveying to the Hindoos, the eſſential tenets of their religion, with all the various forms of their worſhip. The Sanſcrit is a ſonorous language, abounding in pith and conciſeneſs; and its periods flow with boldneſs, and terminate in a cadence peculiarly muſical. An extract of a ſloke, or ſtanza, which has been quoted by Mr. Halhed, is a ſtriking teſtimony of the nervous compoſition, and the laconic turn of the Sanſcrit. Being compoſed of only four lines, I will inſert it, and endeavour to give the tranſlation literally, and in verſe.

Pĕtāche	—	rĕnĕrvān	—	ſhĕtrōō,
Father	—	in debt	—	enemy.
Mātāh	—	ſhĕtrōō	—	rĕſhĕlēnēe,
Mother	—	enemy	—	extravagant, or immoral.
Bhārĭah	—	rŭpĕrvūttēe	—	ſhĕtrōō,
Wife	—	beautiful	—	enemy.
Pōōtrĕ	—	ſhĕtrōō	—	n'pūndĭtāh,
Son	—	enemy	—	unlearned.

The Mother who hath loſt her fame,
The Sire profuſe and foe to ſhame,
Are to their race a peſt:
A Bride's ſoft joys oft' thorns implant,
And he who roams in Folly's haunt,
Deſtroys his Father's reſt.

The Hindoos believe in one God, without beginning and without end, on whom they beſtow, deſcriptive of his powers, a variety of epithets. But the moſt common appellation, and which conveys the ſublimeſt ſenſe of his greatneſs, is, Sree Mun Narrain.* The Hindoos, in their ſupplication to the Deity, addreſs him as endowed with the three attributes of omnipotence, omnipreſence, and omniſcience, which in the Sanſcrit are expreſſed by the terms, Neerangin, Neerakar, and Neergoon. Though theſe

* There is reaſon to believe, that in the more early periods of time, before the prieſts of the Hindoos had found it expedient, for the firmer eſtabliſhment of their ſway over the minds of the people, to raiſe a huge ſuperſtructure of emblematical worſhip, the temples erected to the Supreme Being were plain, and void of perſonification; the remains of one of theſe are now to be ſeen on the ſummit of a hill, near the city of Kaſhmire; which, according to tradition, had been dedicated to the Creator of the world; in which the prayers of thoſe who entered, were addreſſed to the Deity without ſupplicating the interceſſion of an intermediate agent, and where no image, or ſymbol of Divine power, had a place. A gentleman of curious reſearch on the coaſt of Coromandel, informed me, that at Chilemberum, about 20 miles to the ſouthward of Cudalore, he ſaw a religious Hindoo edifice, plain, and without any interior figure, which was devoted to the worſhip of "the Inviſible God," and was never approached but with tokens of profound awe and reverence.

terms

terms may not in literary ſtrictneſs, compriſe the preciſe meaning of the Engliſh text, they convey it virtually, and in the ampleſt ſenſe. The Hindoos likewiſe believe, that the Supreme Deity poſſeſſes a three-fold form, the parts of which are ſaid to be ſeparate. It is compoſed of Sree Mun Narrain, who is ſuppoſed to repreſent a human form; the Alhah Letchmy, deſcribed as a beautiful woman; and a ſerpent, on which the Deity is ſeated. This emblematical aſſemblage, a ſymbol of ſtrength, love, and wiſdom, according to the Hindoo faith, is wholly ſpiritual, and is never repreſented in their temples by any object of matter: they ſay it is indiviſible, and of infinite ſpace.*

In the beginning, the Hindoos believe that the Deity created three men, to whom he gave the names of Brimha, Vyſtnow, and Shevah.† To the firſt was committed the power of creating mankind;—to the ſecond of cherihing them;—and to the third, that of reſtraining, correcting, and deſtroying them.‡ Brimha at one breath formed the human kind out of the four elements, amongſt which he infuſed, if I underſtand the interpretation, and may be allowed the term, a vacuum.§

Before

* Perhaps the myſterious Tryad of Plato, who made a free uſe of Eaſtern knowledge, may have been formed from Indian materials.

† Called alſo Eiſhever, and the Mhah Deve.

‡ In the capacity of Mhah Deve, he is denominated "The Deſtructive Power."

§ The word in the Sanſcrit language, is *akaſh*, the proper ſignification of which,

BEFORE the creation of man, Sree Mun Narrain formed the world out of a perplexed aggregation of matter, which had been covered with the waters, and inhabited by a demon, the ſuppoſed author

I believe, I was not at the time, accurately informed of; for it ſhould ſeem, that Hindoos do not admit of a vacuum, in their ſyſtem of nature:—*akaſh* means, in a general acceptation, aerial ſpace; but in the preſent ſenſe, I am induced to think that it is deſigned by the Hindoos, to denote the grand vivifying principle, termed in ancient fable, the Promethean fire, ſuppoſed to have animated the human body. In this note, it may not be unintereſting to introduce a tenet of the Egyptian theological philoſophers, which correſponds with the idea I have formed of the *akaſh* of the Hindoos, and alſo, certain opinions entertained by them of the formation of the world, and the creation of animated bodies. Theſe philoſophical prieſts, who profeſſed the tenets of Menes, their firſt law-giver, (whom they had deified and entitled, Oſiris, or the ſun), ſaid that fire, or rather, a refined ſpirit, which they diſtinguiſhed from the elemental fire, was diffuſed through all nature, and compoſed the eſſence of that being, who firſt gave form and order to matter. They believed that five elements—the mind, fire, air, earth, and water, conſtituted the entire world: they called the mind Jupiter, which ſignifies the ſource of life, and they conſidered him the father of all intelligent beings. The fire they termed Vulcan, who they alledged, contributed chiefly to the production and perfection of all things. Earth, being as it were the boſom in which all things receive the principles of life, was known by the deſignation of Mother. The water was called Ocean, to which they gave the name of the Nurſing Mother. The air was denominated Minerva, and believed to be the daughter of Jupiter, ſprung from his brain, and always a virgin, as this element is incorruptible and riſes to Heaven.—The Egyptian philoſophers ſuppoſed, that all the original matter of the univerſe had been immerged in a chaos, and was gradually ſeparated from it by fermentation; that the air was in continual agitation; that the fire, liberated from the groſſer matter, had aſcended, and formed the ſun and ſtars, the higheſt objects of the univerſe; that ſpirit, or the mind, the moſt ſubtile part of fire, was diſperſed through all parts, to animate life, and impart voluntary motion. They added, that the earth and water, which after the ſeparation of the air were yet embodied, became a globe, which conſtantly revolving on it's axis, by a motion excited by the fire the ſeparation of the two bodies was effected; and that the rays of the ſun, making new fermentations on the ſurface of the earth,

author of evil, whom the Godhead drove into an abyſs under the earth.*

THE Hindoos, as Mr. Halhed in his tranſlation of the Code of Hindoo Laws has fully ſet forth, are arranged in four grand caſts, or tribes;† that of the Bramin, the Chittery, the Bhyſe, and the Sooder. Each of theſe caſts is ſubdivided into numerous ſects, the particular uſages of which are preſerved with care and attentive diſtinctions. There are ſectaries, alſo of the ſame tribe, who do not admit of the intercourſe of marriage with each other,

earth, yet ſoft and ſlimy, produced numerous excreſſences, which, nouriſhed and ſtrengthened by the groſs vapours of the night,—the action of the moon,—and afterwards, by the heat of the day, appeared at length, in the forms of different animals. Thoſe in whom the fire predominated, mounted into air, and became birds: thoſe which participated more of earth, as men, quadrupeds—and reptiles, remained on the ſurface, while the more aqueous ſubſtances deſcended to the waters, their proper place of abode. It was neceſſary to give reaſons, why nature had ſtopped in her primary operations, and did not form many more animal creatures, as the manner of formation had been ſo ſimple and eaſy. Syſtematic philoſophy, even in its infancy, did not want reſource; and that of the Egyptians has met the objection, by urging, that nature had originally inſpired every ſpecies of animals with the inſtinct of propagation; having ſagely foreſeen, that when the ſun and the winds had entirely dried the earth, it would be incapable of producing perfect animals.—See Mr. Labbathier's Hiſtory of Ancient Nations, tranſlated by M. Stockdale.

* The writers of the Hindoo mythology, have given various and diffuſe deſcriptions of the origin of the world, and of the human and animal race, but unite in blending them with a ſeries of extravagant and diſguſting fables.

† There is in India an aboriginal race of people, who are not claſſed in any of the ſects, and confined to the moſt menial offices. They are not permitted to enter any temple of the Hindoos, and they obſerve no reſtriction. On ſome parts of the coaſt of Coromandel, they are called Dhereſand Pariahs; and, in Bengal, Harees.

or

or of eating at the ſame board. It ſhould ſeem, that the genuine race of the Chittery has for a great length of time been extinct, and that its place is now occupied by a ſpurious tribe. The Hindoos compoſing theſe caſts and claſſes, are ultimately branched in two diviſions; the one denominated Vyſtnow Bukht; the other, Sheva Bukht. The followers of the former deity are uſually diſtinguiſhed by a longitudinal mark on the forehead, whilſt thoſe of the latter draw a parrallel line on that part. Vyſtnow is worſhipped under the repreſentation of a human figure, having a circle of heads, and four hands; emblems of an all-ſeeing and all provident Being. The figure of a fabulous bird, on which he is ſuppoſed to ride, and denoting the velocity of his motion, is occaſionally placed in front of this image. Sheva, or Eiſhwer, and as he is often denominated by the Hindoos, the Mhah Deve, is uſually repreſented by a compound figure, deſcribing the male and female parts of generation, and deſigned as the ſymbol of procreation and fecundity: theſe faculties, or qualities, being claſſed amongſt the choiceſt bleſſings of the Hindoos, and the deprivation of them deemed a ſevere reproach and misfortune. Facing this deſignation of Mhah Deve, is ſometimes ſeen, in a ſuppliant poſture, the ſtatue of a cow, or bull: an animal ſaid to have derived his ſacred qualities, from having been choſen by this god, as the favourite medium of his conveyance. But the more enlightened pundits ſay, that this creature hath been preſerved from ſlaughter, by its great utility to man; it being his ableſt aſſiſtant in the labours of the field,

field, and the chief provider of his immediate ſuſtenance.* It doubtleſs argues a ſound policy in the Hindoos, to ſtamp the ox with this ſacred mark; for were its fleſh eaten, as Hindoſtan is thinly ſupplied with horſes, the various branches of agriculture would ſuffer an eſſential injury.

ANOTHER figure repreſents Sheva, with four hands, holding different emblems of his power; and five heads, four of which are directed to the cardinal points, and the fifth is placed with the face upwards, in the ſuppoſed act of contemplating the godhead. This deity who occupies numerous forms, is figured alſo with three eyes, one of which is placed in the forehead.

In gratitude for the ſervice which Brimha has performed on earth, it would reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that the thankſgiving of his people would in ſome degree be proportioned to his works. But the Hindoos have not dedicated one temple to his honor; nor have they eſtabliſhed a ſingle feſtival, in remembrance of his deeds. It would redound but little to my credit, did I inſert in this place the reaſons alledged in their religious tracts, for the neglect of Brimha. It is a tale framed to amuſe the credulous Hindoo, and procure a meal to an artful prieſt. The oſtenſible want of attention to the memory of Brimha, may on a more abſtracted ground be aſcribed to an opinion, that the powers of procreation having been primarily ſet in action, and operating by a law impulſive

* Milk and butter compoſe a great part of the aliment of an Hindoo.

and

and undeviating, whoſe immediate benefits exiſt, and are conſpicuouſly diſplayed in its effects, no ritual neceſſity called for the commemoration of its firſt cauſe, or the propitiation of its future influence.

The Hindoos believe implicity in predeſtination, and in the tranſmigration of the ſoul. The firſt, though it may operate in cramping the genius and obſtructing it's progreſſive powers, has a happy tendency in aſſuaging their misfortunes, and adminiſtering a comfort in all the wants of life. They ſay, it is the hand of God, which for ſome inſcrutable purpoſe, directs and impels the actions of his creatures. The doctrine of Metempſychoſis reſtrains them from the uſe of animal food,* an aliment not neceſſary in a hot climate, and often attended with pernicious conſequences. This reſtriction may alſo have contributed to infuſe into their minds an abhorrence of ſanguinary acts, and inculcate the virtues of humanity and general philanthropy.

The Hindoos compute their grand evolutions of time by epochs, called in their language Jogues, of which there are four, correſponding, in the aſcribed qualities, with their golden, ſilver, brazen, and iron ages of the ancients. The preſent, they ſay, is the Khullee,† or the fourth Jogue; and that at the expiration of every age, the Supreme Being has deſtroyed the world, and that a

* This tenet is not, at this day, ſtrictly adhered to; for the Hindoos of the ſecond and fourth caſt occaſionally uſe fleſh meat, and the Bramins of Bengal invariably eat fiſh.

† The Chriſtian Æra, 1787, correſponds with 4888, of the Khulle Taque.

continued

continued ſucceſſion of Jogues will revolve *ad infinitum*. The records of this ancient people teem ſo profuſely with fable, and abound throughout in ſuch extravagant relations of their demigods, ſimilar in their feaſts to the Bacchus, Hercules, and Theſeus of the Greeks, that no rational or ſatisfactory concluſion can be drawn, for any adjuſtment of chronology. A pundit will introduce into his legend a lack of years,* with as much facility, and perhaps conviction to himſelf, as our commentators of theological hiſtory would reduce to their ſtandard, half a century.

THE principles of the Hindoo religion, with its moſt eſſential tenets, were compoſed, it is aſſerted, by Brimha, and compriſed in four books, entitled the Bairds or Vaids; a word in the Sanſcrit language ſignifying myſtery. In that part of the peninſula of India bordering on the Coromandel ſide, theſe ſacred writings are named the Vaiduns. The Talinghahs and Malabars make little diſtinction between the letters B, and V, and invariably terminate with an M, all Sanſcrit words. The Shaſtre is a voluminious commentary on the Bairds, and has been written by various pundits, for the purpoſe of illuſtrating the Hindoo Mythology. From the Shaſtre proceed thoſe prepoſterous ceremonies, which have been dragged into the Hindoo ſyſtem of worſhip; all tending to ſhackle the vulgar mind, and produce in it a ſlaviſh reverence for the tribe of Bramins. The privelege of reading the Bairds, and expounding

* An hundred thouſand.

its texts, is only allowed to them; and prohibited to the other caſts, under ſevere penalties. By the ſole inveſtment of this important authority, the prieſt is left at liberty to explain the original doctrine in the manner that may moſt forcibly conſolidate the power and promote the intereſt of his order. In the tranſmigration of the ſoul into different bodies, conſiſts the various gradations of reward and puniſhment amongſt the Hindoos. Conformably to their actions, they are tranſpoſed into ſuch bodies, whether of the human or brute ſpecies, as their conduct, whilſt they occupied their former tenements, may have merited. They do not admit of eternal puniſhments, and ſhudder at the idea of a belief ſo diſconſonant to the opinion which they have formed of the Supreme Being.

Evil diſpoſitions, they ſay, are chaſtiſed by a confinement in the bodies of thoſe animals, whom they moſt reſemble in their nature, and are conſtrained to occupy them, till their vices are either eradicated, or ſufficiently qualified to deſerve the poſſeſſion of ſuperior forms. The good actions of man, the Hindoo law-giver has written, will be rewarded by his admiſſion into thoſe bodies which enjoy the utmoſt human happineſs; as that which the magiſtrate feels on the juſt and merciful execution of the truſt which has been committed to him; or that high ſenſe of pleaſure which the man of humanity participates, when he has alleviated the diſtreſſes of the unfortunate, or otherwiſe promoted the welfare of mankind. —After a certain ſeries of tranſmigration rendered acceptable to

the

the Deity by a purſuit of virtue, and when his ſoul ſhall be completely purified from the taints of evil, the Hindoo is admitted to a participation of the radiant and never-ceaſing glory of his firſt cauſe.* The ſoul's receiving this act of bliſs, is deſcribed by comparing it to a ray of light, attracted by the grand powers of the ſun, to which it ſhoots with an immenſe velocity, and is there abſorbed in the blaze of ſplendor.

YUM Durm Rajah officiates in the ſame capacity amongſt the Hindoos, as Minos did in the infernal regions of the ancients. All ſouls liberated from the body, are ſuppoſed to appear at the tribunal of Yum Durm, where their former actions are proclaimed aloud, and examined by this judge, who paſſes an immediate ſentence. Should the diſpoſition of a man, have been ſo flagitiouſly depraved, as to be judged unworthy, even of an introduction into the body of the vileſt animal, ſuch coporal puniſhment is impoſed on him, as may be thought adequate to his crimes; and the ſoul is afterwards placed in ſome ſuitable ſtation on earth. According to the religious tradition of the Hindoos. Sree Mun Narrain, ſince the creation of the world, has at nine different periods aſſumed incarnated forms, either for the purpoſe of eradicating ſome terreſtrial evil, or chaſtiſing the ſins of mankind.† The Hin-

* The union of the human ſoul with the divine etherial ſubſtance of the univerſe, is the ancient doctrine of Pythagoras and Plato; but it ſeems to exclude any perſonal or conſcious immortality. See Gibbon's Hiſtory, volume 4th, p. 202, in a note.

† According to the Hindoo tradition, a tenth incarnation of the Deity is yet expected.

doos worſhip a ſecondary ſpecies of deity, which they wildly multiply to the number of thirty-three crores,* who in their different functions, are deſigned to repreſent the numberleſs attributes of the Supreme Deity.

FROM the crowd of images which the Bramin has placed in the temples of the Hindoos, they have been branded with the appellation of idolaters. When this mode of offering ſupplications or thanſgiving to the Supreme Being is diſpaſſionately examined, it will be ſeen, that a perſonification of the attributes of the Deity is not unfitly adapted to the general comprehenſion. Thoſe (and they compoſe a great portion of the people) who are not endowed with the ability of reading the praiſe of God, can with facility conceive a certain idea of his greatneſs, in contemplating a figure, ſculptured with many heads and with many hands, adorned with every ſymbol of human power, and beheld by all claſſes of men with unfeigned reverence. The origin of emblematical figures has long preceded the uſe of letters. We find in the Spaniſh records, that intelligence of the firſt arrival of the Europeans on the coaſt of Mexico, was deſcribed to Montezuma by figures painted on cotton cloth. In a rude ſociety, it was evidently a more eaſy operation to convey an idea through the medium of a figure cut in wood or moulded in clay, than to invent an alphabet, and out of it compoſe a regulated aſſemblage of words, neceſſary for the formation of a written language.

* A crore is a hundred lacks.

THE

The immenſe group of Hindoo gods enjoy immortality, with which they are gifted by drinking a water called Amrut, a mythological beverage, bearing ſome analogy to the nectar of Homer's Deities. In the mythology of the Hindoos is found an elegant deſcription of nine goddeſſes, reſembling, in a certain degree, the muſes of the ancients, in the nature of their occupations. There is alſo moſt pictureſquely delineated, the god of love, who has a variety of epithets, all ſignificant of the unbounded ſway which he poſſeſſes over the hearts of men. His common names are Kaum and Mudden, and he is repreſented as a pleaſing youth, armed with a bow of ſugar cane, ſtrung with the ſtings of bees; and five arrows, denoting the five ſenſes, each of which is baited with different qualities of the poiſon of love. A picture was found at Tanjore, when the fort was captured* riding on a elephant, whoſe form was compoſed of the figures of ſeven young women, entwined together in ſo ingenious and whimſical a manner, as to exhibit an exact ſhape of that bulky animal. In the Beſs† Eiſhwer Pagoda at Benares, is ſeen a ſtone figure, well executed, of the god of the ſun ſitting in a chariot, and driving a horſe with twelve heads, an evident alluſion to the diviſions of the ecliptic.

* It is alſo ſaid to repreſent Kiſhin, an incarnated form of the Deity.

† An abreviated compound of Vyſtnow, or Biſhen and Eiſhwer. In this temple, which is dedicated to theſe two Deities in conjunction, the ſectaries of both offer up their prayers.

With-

WITHOUT putting etymology to the torture, or moulding to the ſhape of his ſyſtem the deceitful aids of chronology, the careful obſerver might be enabled to trace ſome parts of the religious worſhip of the Hindoos into Egypt. He would diſcover the ſacred Bull or Cow of Sheva, placed high in the holy legends of the Coptis; and he would ſee the ſnake, one of the myſterious aſſociates of Sree Mun Narrain, devoutly revered by that nation, as the hieroglyphic of wiſdom and longevity. It would appear that the onion, mentioned by hiſtorians to be held in ſuch profound veneration amongſt the Egyptians, is no leſs marked with reverence in Hindoſtan; where, though the uſe of a vegetable diet is ſtrongly inculcated, and with not a very large deviation, uſually adopted, the onion is forbidden to many of the ſects; and in the upper part of India, when an oath, on which a matter of importance depends, is adminiſtered, the Bramin frequently introduces the onion, to render the ceremony more ſacred.

IN comparing the religious worſhip of the Hindoos with that of the ancients, the functions of ſome of the Deities appear conſpicuouſly uniform; and were it poſſible to procure a deſcription of the occupations and various powers of the Hindoo ſubaltern gods, it might be found, that the group of the weſtern pantheon had been ſelected from the divine aſſembly of Brimha. The Egyptians and the Greeks, in their commerce with India, through the channel of the Red Sea, have left, I have been ſometimes induced to believe, tokens behind them of their connection with the

Hindoos.

Hindoos. In the collection of a gentleman at Benares are ſeveral valuable antiques, which were purchaſed by the merchants of that city: one of which, repreſenting a matron, is cut in a manner bearing every mark of Grecian ſkill; and another exhibited Cleopatra in the act of being bitten by the aſp. The ſame gentleman had in his poſſeſſion a Meduſa's head, on an emerald, found alſo at Benares, which being ſent to England, was unreſervedly acknowledged to be the work of a Grecian or Roman maſter. Some years ago, a high finiſhed Camaieu was procured at Guzerat, whereon Hercules ſlaying the Nemean lion, was executed with much taſte and ſpirit. Theſe circumſtances are adduced to ſupport a conjecture, that, during the intercourſe which exiſted between the natives of Egypt and India, the former might have introduced into their country, with ſome of the rare and luxurious products of Hindooſtan, certain tenets and ceremonies of Hindoo mythology. In endeavouring to point out the track of theſe antiques, it is to be noticed, that they might have found a way into India in the cabinets of the Mahometans, who in the more early period of their empire, were little leſs enthuſiaſtic in the admiration of Grecian productions and literature, than the Romans. And it is a fact in need of no illuſtration, that the revival of letters and the arts, after the Roman world had been immerſed in Gothic ruin, received a powerful aid from the princes of the Khaliphat.

My knowledge of aſtronomy is ſo confined, that I am almoſt incapa-

incapacitated from deſcribing the attainment of the Bramins in that ſcience, long before the æra in which it flouriſhed in the eaſtern world. The zodiac, with its twelve ſigns, is well known to the Hindoos, and they have beſtowed on the ſeven days of the week, which commences with ſunday, the names of the planets. The ſolar year* of the Hindoos, which is arranged in ſix ſeaſons, conſiſts of twelve months, containing three hundred and ſixty-five days; and once in the term of four years an additional day is annexed for the completion of the earth's preciſe revolutions round the ſun. Commercial tranſactions and writings of correſpondence are dated amongſt the Hindoos according to the lunar, or Lumbut year, which commences about the period of the vernal equinox. The month is calculated from the full moon, and is divided into thirty equal parts. Thoſe comprehending the moon's encreaſe, are termed Bood, and the portion of its wane, Bole, or Bood. On the third year of the Lumbut, an extraordinary month is altercalated, for the incluſion of the time required in equalizing the lunar and ſolar ſyſtems. The Joaguels are divided into cycles of twelve and ſixty years, each of which is diſtinguiſhed by its pecu-

* The ſolar, or as it is denominated by the Hindoos, the Lunkrant year, begins on the 10th or 11th of April, and its months are compoſed occaſionally of 29, 30, 31, and 32 days. The common epocha of Hindooſtan was eſtabliſhed by the Rajah Vickerum Mhajeƈt, and founded 57 years before the year of Chriſt. Some Hindoo nations compute their time from other periods, as in Bengal; but their hiſtorical writings are generally adapted to the year of Vickerum Mhajeƈt; who was much celebrated in Hindooſtan, for his magnificence, and liberal protection of men of genius.

liar

liar denomination.* The obſervatory at Benares, though rude in its ſtructure, and containing inſtruments ſuitably coarſe, proves notwithſtanding, that the Hindoos poſſeſs the knowledge of aſcertaining the motions of the heavenly bodies. Could acceſs be obtained to ſuch records of the Hindoos as are diveſted of that redundancy of fable with which their prieſts have ſo copiouſly interwoven them, it would not be preſumptuous to ſuppoſe, that we would diſcover they had been, in the more early ages of the world, one of the moſt enlightened and powerful nations that inhabited the earth.

THE empire of the Hindoos, as related in many of their hiſtorical tracts, conſiſted of fifty-ſix ſeparate principalities, ultimately governed by one prince, whoſe kingdom extended from the ſouthern limits of Tartary to the iſland of Ceylon, and from the confines of Aſſam and Arracan to the river Indus. This extenſive ſpace was inhabited by a people who were divided into four diſtinct tribes, each exerciſing different functions, but all uniting in their various branches to promote the general good. It abounded in fair and opulent cities, which were decorated with magnificent

* The Hindoos, I believe, commonly claſs their time in cycles of ſixty years, though that of twelve is alſo well known to them. Amongſt ſome articles of plunder, captured by the Company's troops in a Bantan Fort, was found, with other objects of the Hindoo worſhip, an image of the Mhah Deve, and a printed repreſentation of the figures deſcribing the Tartar cycle, which is compoſed of 12 years. This figurative mode of marking time, which has prevailed from high antiquity in Japan, China, Siam, and through the vaſt regions of Tartary, is at this day obſerved in the Turkiſh Empire.

temples for the worſhip of the gods; and with ſumptuous manſions, gardens, and fountains, for the pleaſure and the accommodation of the inhabitants. Uſeful and elegant artiſans, ſkilled in raiſing ſtupendous buildings, in fabricating gold, ſilver, and the moſt delicate cotton cloths, and in the curious workmanſhip of precious ſtones and metals, all found encouragement in the exerciſe of their profeſſions.* Salutary ordinances directed the Hindoos in the puniſhment of crimes and the ſecurity of property; and when ſome glaring indulgencies in favour of the ſacred tribe are excepted, we muſt yield an unreſerved approbation to the juſtice and wiſdom of their laws. The traveller was enabled to journey through this extenſive empire, with an eaſe and ſafety, unknown in other countries. The public roads were ſhaded with trees; and frequent habitations, accommodated with a pond or well, were founded for the conveniency of the paſſenger; and ſhould he have been pillaged in any part of the country, the diſtrict in which the damage had been ſuſtained, was obliged to make reſtitution—When this empire, its poliſhed people, and the progreſs which ſcience had made amongſt them, are attentively conſidered; when, at the ſame period, a retroſpective view is thrown on

* This deſcription may be judged chimerical and extravagant by thoſe who have not witneſſed the conſtruction of the ancient Hindoo monuments, or examined the hiſtory of their empire when it firſt belonged to the Mahometans. Theſe ſoldiers are repreſented to have been faſcinated by the diſplay of its grandeur, and to have ſtood amazed at the treaſures that were diſcloſed. Vide Dow's Relation of the Plunder of the Samnaut Temple.

the

the ſtates of the European world, then immerſed in, or emerging from, ignorance and barbarity, we muſt behold Hindoſtan with wonder and reſpect; and we may aſſert without forfeiting the claims of truth and moderation, that however far the European world now out-ſtrips the nations of the Eaſt, the followers of Brimha in the early periods of life, were poſſeſſed of a fund amply ſtored with valuable materials of philoſophy and uſeful knowledge. The humane mind will naturally feel a ſenſe of ſorrow and pity for a people, who have fallen from ſo conſpicuous a height of glory and fortune, and who probably have contributed to poliſh and exalt the nations, who now hold them in ſubjection.

To form an accurate judgment of the genius of the Hindoos, or to deſcribe the limit to which they extended art and ſcience, if were requiſite, could the neceſſary materials be procured, to exhibit the condition of their empire, before it had felt the ſevere and victorious arms of the Mahometans.—A partial and degrading relation would be made of the Hindoos, were a deſcription of their laws, government, and manner, taken from the appearance they make at this day in the eye of the world. Hindoſtan was overthrown by a fierce race of men, who in their rapid courſe of conqueſt, exerted the moſt furious efforts in levelling every monument of worſhip and taſte. They maſſacred the prieſts and plundered the temples, with a keenneſs and ferocity, in which their firſt chiefs might have gloried. A people thus cruſhed, groaning under the load of oppreſſion, and diſmayed at the ſight of inceſſant cruelties,

cruelties, muſt ſoon have loſt the ſpirit of ſcience, and the exertion of genius: eſpecially as the fine arts were ſo blended with their ſyſtem of religion, that the perſecution of the one, muſt have ſhed a baneful influence on the exiſtence of the other. To decide on, or affix, the character of the Hindoo, from the point of view in which he is now beheld, would, in a large degree, be ſimilar to the attempt of conveying an exact idea of ancient Greece, from the materials now preſented by that wretched country. The diſquiſition of the man of philanthrophy, liberated from the fetters of prejudice, will be far different:—he will enjoy congenial pleaſure, in diſpelling the ſhade of obſcurity, which hath long enveloped the hiſtory of the Hindoo:—he will endeavour to carry it back to that æra of grandeur, which his country enjoyed in her day of proſperity, and there hold him out to the information of mankind; the generality of whom, whether from motives of contempt, or habits of indolence, have yet acquired but a trivial and incorrect knowledge of this ancient people. It will then be ſeen, that the genius of the Hindoos was happily led on; and that their bent of diſpoſition was aptly regulated and attempered by the rules eſtabliſhed for the performance of their ſeveral profeſſions. A preciſion which repelled the encroachments of error or deſign, preſcribed to them their reſpective duties in the ſtate, and in ſociety, and wholly precluded any other ſect from infringing on the privileges of another. The Bramin was inveſted with the uncontrolled guardianſhip of religion; he became the perpetual medium, through which the inferior

ferior claſſes addreſſed their god: he was alſo the ſole depoſitary and inſtructor of ſcience, and to his care and ability was intruſted the education of youth. The importance of theſe offices muſt have given to the Bramin great ſway in a community where a knowledge of religious worſhip, from its complex variety, becomes a taſk of arduous labour; and where, at the ſame time, a performance of the rites of his religion, is deemed an obligation indiſpenſably incumbent on the Hindoo, in his acquiſition of future happineſs. Theſe employments were judged of ſufficient magnitude to occupy the whole attention of the Bramin, and he was ſtrictly interdicted from all temporal affairs. The authority of exerciſing the functions of royalty, ſeems to have devolved without reſerve on the Chittery or Rajah, and his poſſeſſions were held hereditary in the line of legitimate male primogeniture. The youngeſt branch of this race were employed in the army, and entruſted with the charge of the forts and ſtrong holds of the country. The occupation of a merchant, with the tranſactions of traffic, was committed to the Bhyſe, or Banian, and it was declared unlawful for the other tribes to engage in commerce. The huſbandman, the artiſan, the private ſoldier, and the labourer, compoſe the Looder, or the fourth caſt of Hindoo; and each of theſe reſpective profeſſions was excluſively purſued. Thus, diſtinctly arranged, and on the ſevereſt penalties prohibited from extraneous mixture, or the admiſſion of proſelytes, the Hindoo government

vernment acquired an uniformity and vigour, the natural result of its principles.*

WERE an analogy aſcertained between the mythology of the Hindoos and Egyptians, perceptible traces of which are occaſionally preſented, it might then become a matter of doubt which people, for the greateſt ſpace of time have been the moſt poliſhed and enlightened. From the examples which have been brought forward for the explanation of ſome of the moſt conſpicuous parts of the mythology of the Hindoos, and to demonſtrate the probable antiquity of that nation, it may ſeem, that I favour the belief of [illegible] having received a portion of her [illegible] ſcience and religion from India. With a deference to popular opinion, and diſclaiming all fabrication of ſyſtem, I muſt avow an inclination to this opinion. One fact amongſt ſome others, afforded me a fair proof of the high antiquity of the Hindoos, as a civilized nation, and marks a ſtrong diſapprobation of a foreign intercourſe.

THEY are forbidden to croſs the river Attoc, the name of which, in certain dialects of their language, ſignifies prohibition; and ſhould they paſs this boundary, they are held unclean, and in

* Many of the fences that marked the limits of the reſpective tribes, are now broken down. The Bramins of the Decan and Punjal, have taken up the ſword, and are ſeen crowding the ranks of an army; the Chittery occaſionally takes himſelf to traffic, and the Sooder has become the inheritor of principalities. Mararow, the gallant Mahrattah officer and chief of Ghooty, was of the fourth caſt of Hindoos.

the

the ſtrict ſenſe of religious law, forfeit their rank in the tribes they may be claſſed in. They were alſo, either forbidden from embarking on the ocean, or they were deterred from undertaking marine expeditions, by the difficulties incurred in procuring at ſea, the requiſite diet for a Hindoo. The probability therefore is not apparent, that any part of a people, fenced in by this reſtriction, and who were ſo proudly centered in themſelves, as to reject with abhorrence, the admiſſion of proſelyes, would have emigrated into a diſtant country, and brought from thence a ſyſtem of religious worſhip; nor does any probable tradition authoriſe the belief of an Egyptian colony having been eſtabliſhed in India. The capacious ſpace which Hindoſtan occupies on the face of the globe, the advantages it derives from ſoil and climate, and from its numerous rivers, ſome of them of the firſt claſs of magnitude, may be adduced as reaſonable arguments of its having been peopled at a more early period of time than Egypt, which does not poſſeſs the like local benefits. If the degree of perfection which manufactures have attained, be received as a criterion to judge of the progreſs of civilization, and if it be alſo admitted as a teſt of deciding on the antiquity of a people, who adopt no foreign improvements, little heſitation would occur, in beſtowing the palm of precedence on Hindoſtan, whoſe fabrics of the moſt delicate and beautiful contexture, have been long held in admiration, and have hitherto ſtood unrivalled. Let me conclude this comparative view, with obſerving, and I truſt diſpaſſionately, that when we ſee a people

people poſſeſſed of an ample ſtock of ſcience of well digeſted ordinances, for the protection and improvement of ſociety—and of a religion whoſe tenets conſiſt of the utmoſt refinement, and variety of ceremony—and, at the ſame time, obſerve amongſt other Aſiatic nations, and the Egyptians of former times, but partial diſtributions of knowledge, law, and religion—we muſt be led to entertain a ſuppoſition, that the proprietors of the leſſer, have been ſupplied from the ſources of the greater fund. Theſe reflections which have been furniſhed by experience and various information, will perhaps afford more ſatisfaction, than the laboured and perplexed proofs of dates and etymology, which are often framed, as they moſt commodiouſly accord with ſome favourite hypotheſis.

Amongst the Hindoos, marriage,* when it can be performed with any degree of conveniency, is deemed an indiſpenſable duty, and it is believed, that propagating the ſpecies in that ſtate, entitles parents to ſingular marks of the divine favour. They ſhew a diſapprobation of celibacy by many marks of opprobium and ſcorn; and I have frequently obſerved, that when a Hindoo, from queſtion, or other cauſes, has been brought to the affirmation of

* This word, uſed in the Sanſcrit language, is often termed Callian, which ſignifies pleaſure. The Hindoos, in common uſage, have but one wife, and when this rule is deviated from, it is conſidered a ſpecies of indecency. There is a ſet, though not numerous, of mendicants, called Joguees, or Byraghees, who live in a ſtate of celibacy.

his

his ſingle ſtate, he has appeared diſconcerted and aſhamed, and immediately attributed his ſolitary condition to ill fortune, or ſome domeſtic inconveniency. It is to this inſtitution, which is ſtrongly recommended, and, I may ſay, even enforced, that the generally extenſive population of Hindoſtan, and its ſpeedy recovery from the calamities of war and famine, may be largely aſcribed. The entire ſyſtem of domeſtic ordinance and œconomy of the Hindoos, is founded on a firm, yet, ſimple baſis; from which ariſe effects, happy in themſelves, and powerfully operative in uniting the bonds of ſociety. By the ancient laws of the country, the wife depends for the enjoyment of every pleaſure, as well as for moſt of the ordinary accommodations of life, on the immediate exiſtence of her huſband; and it becomes her invariable intereſt to preſerve his health, as much of her happineſs is centered in his living to an old age. On the demiſe of the huſband, the wife virtually devolves into a *caput mortuum*; ſhe is not permitted to marry again, ſhe is deprived of all conſequence in the family, and diveſted of the marks of ornament and diſtinction. There are certain religious ceremonies not lawful for her to perform, and in ſome inſtances, ſhe is held unclean; but on all occaſions, after the huſband's death, the widow is claſſed in the houſe as a ſlave or a menial ſervant. But this uſage has not ſo generally prevailed in latter times. The wives of the deceaſed Hindoos have moderated that ſpirit of enthuſiaſtic pride, or impulſe of affection, which was uſed to urge them to ſelf-deſtruction on the pile of their huſbands.

Their grief can now be aſſuaged, and their religious duties reconciled, by a participation of domeſtic comforts; and many of the Hindoo widows, eſpecially in the Marhattah country, have acquired by their ability, their wealth, connection, or intrigue, the poſſeſſion of extenſive power and influence. Amongſt the ſuperior tribes of the Hindoos, where the ſenſe of honor or ſhame, is more delicately preſerved, rather than ſuffer a degradation, by which female attractions are extinguiſhed, and the pride and ſpirit of the ſex depreſſed, the women are impelled by a furious courage, ſoftened by the term of matrimonial affection, to terminate the miſery of their condition in death. According to a paſſage of the Shaſter of the Hindoos, which I examined by the help of an interpreter, it is ſpecifically ordained, that a wife ought to burn herſelf at her huſband's death; ſhould ſhe not poſſeſs the reſolution of ſuſtaining this trial, ſhe is directed to make a pilgrimage to ſome of the ſacred places of Hindoo ablution, as Benares, Allahabad, Ghyah, &c. and there, appropriating her property to charitable uſes, offer up a ſacrifice of her hair to the memory of her huſband. She is not to decorate her perſon with jewels, with gold, ſilver, or any female ornament: ſhe is not to uſe perfumes, nor eat fleſh, fiſh, or butter; but to live on plain barley or wheaten bread, and eat but once in a day. Her time is to be employed in the conſtant worſhip of God, and the purification of her mind, from anger, malice, and avarice; and ſhe is to withdraw herſelf from all the concerns of the world. If her life is paſſed in theſe acts ſhe is promiſed after death to enter heaven,

heaven, without ſuffering intermediate purgation. In addition to the dread of ſo degraded a ſtate of mortification, the widow on the other ſide is told by the Bramins, that the performance of the act of ſelf-deſtruction will entitle her to an ample participation of exquiſite future joys, and will enſure to her progeny the pre-eminent favor of the Deity. Though the iſſue of ſuch a reſolution forcibly affects thoſe feelings of humanity cheriſhed amongſt European nations, yet as the uſage appears to originate in a cauſe tending to ſtrengthen domeſtic policy, it ought not to be haſtily condemned, or imputed altogether to the dictates of cruelty or injuſtice.

Conformably to the ſtate of ſubordination in which Hindoo women are placed, it has been judged expedient to debar them the uſe of letters. The Hindoos hold the invariable language, that acquired accompliſhments are not neceſſary to the domeſtic claſſes of the female ſex, whether for contributing to her individual happineſs, or preſerving the decorum of character, and ſimplicity of manners, which alone render her uſeful or amiable, in the eſtimation of her family. They urge that a knowledge of literature would conduce to draw a woman from her houſehold cares, and give a diſreliſh to thoſe offices, in which conſiſt the only ſatisfaction and amuſement that ſhe can, with propriety, and an obſervance of rectitude, partake of; and ſuch is the force of cuſtom, that a Hindoo woman would incur a ſevere reproach, were it known that ſhe could read or write. The Hindoo dancing girls, whoſe occupations are avowedly devoted to the public pleaſure, are, on the contrary

taught the uſe of letters, and are minutely inſtructed in the knowledge of every attraction and blandiſhment, which can operate in communicating the ſenſual pleaſure of love. Theſe women are not obliged to ſeek ſhelter in private haunts, nor are they, on account of their profeſſional conduct, marked with opprobrious ſtigma. They compoſe a particular claſs of ſociety, and enjoy the avowed protection of government, for which they are aſſeſſed according to their ſeveral capacities. No religious ceremony or feſtival is thought to be completely performed, with the accompanyment of dancing women. They uſually attend on a certain day of the week, at the court of the prince or governor of the diſtrict, either to make an obeiſance, or exhibit a profeſſional entertainment; and in ſome of the provinces, they are endowed with grants of the public lands.*

An Hindoo family is governed with efficient power by the male ſenior member, to whom the other branches ſhew an attentive reſpect, and in domeſtic life a ready ſubmiſſion. A ſon will not ſit in the preſence of his father without expreſs deſire, and in his deportment and converſation, obſerves to him a dutiful, as well

* The Hindoo dancing-women are here only alluded to, and thoſe particularly who aſſiſt (which is a numerous claſs) at the ceremonies of worſhip. As they receive a maintenance from the revenue of the pagoda, or from private perſons, they are not driven by neceſſity into a promiſcuous intercourſe with the world. But it is to be obſerved, that thoſe who do not receive any permament ſtipend, are little leſs diſſolute and abandoned in their habits of life, than a female of ſimilar deſcription in European countries.

as

as affectionate, behaviour. In the courſe of a long reſidence in India, and rather a cloſe inveſtigation of Hindoo cuſtoms and manners, I never diſcovered what our language has termed a free thinker.* The moſt celebrated characters amongſt the Hindoos, and their men of the world, as Scindia, Nanah Purnawees,† and the Bhohulla, believe the tenets of the doctrine of Brimha with as much ſincerity, and practice the minuteſt ceremony with as much ſcrupulous attention, as the ſimpleſt or moſt bigotted peaſant in the country.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

* There are ſome ſchiſmatic ſects found amongſt the Hindoos, and even claſſes of that people, who reject the authority of the Baids, and the whole conſtruction of Bramin mythology; but however pure the original mode of their worſhip might have been, it is now groſsly entangled with ceremony and emblem. The moſt conſiderable branch of theſe ſectaries is denominated Pooje; who have beſtowed on the object of their adoration, the title Pauruſs Naut, which in the Sanſcrit may be termed the lord of the alchymical philoſopher's ſtone.

† Mharattah chiefs of eminence.

LET-

LETTER III.

Benares, 30th November, 1782.

MY DEAR SIR,

ON the 3d of this month, I made an excurſion to Bidgi-ghur,* a place rendered famous in the Bengal annals, from a large amount of plunder acquired there by the Engliſh troops. On the firſt day, I arrived at Lutteef-ghur, about 18 miles to the ſouthweſt of Bernares. The fort was entirely deſerted, and the paſſage approaching to it is almoſt choaked up by bruſhwood, and the projected branches of trees. Lutteef-ghur ſtands in the centre of a circular range of hills, from the ſummit of which, a thick, and in moſt places a high wood, reaches to the walls of the fort. The air of this ſpot being deprived of a quick circulation, has acquired a malignant quality, and communicates its pernicious influence to all animal bodies. It is in theſe ſituations, where as it is termed, the hill fever is produced:—a diſeaſe, which pervading every part of the animal œconomy, contaminates

* Bidgi and Idgi, according to the mythology of the Hindoos, keep watch at the gate of Paradiſe; Ghur, in the Hindoo, is a fortreſs or ſtrong hold.

the

the whole maſs of blood, and will only yield to the power of mercury. The water alſo in ſuch places partakes of the like baneful property:—it ſhould ſeem that the air infuſes into this element, a certain portion of that peſtiferous quality, with which the climate of woody and confined countries in India is ever pregnant. The falling of the branches and leaves into rivulets and reſervoirs of water, may likewiſe increaſe the noxious effect. Having frequently witneſſed the ill effects of a confined air, I am the more emboldened to hazard theſe conjectures; which I will cloſe with noticing to you, that wherever I have obſerved an impurity of air the water has been equally pernicious.

At the gate of the fort, had taken up his lonely reſidence, a Mahometan Faquir, who bore on him, poor man! evident proofs of the deſtructive climate of Lutteef-ghur;—he was meagre, wan, and nearly conſumed by the violence of a fever and ague. When I deſired him to leave ſo melancholy a ſtation, and go where he might recover his health, he ſhewed little attention to the advice, and preferred, he ſaid, an exiſtence in this place, under a load of miſery and the precarious charity of paſſengers, to the riſk of ſtarving in places where he might be wholly unknown.

On the 4th, after a Journey of about twenty miles, I arrived near the foot of Bidgi-ghur hill, where I ſlept, and in the morning walked up to the fort, which is a circumvallation of the crown of a rocky hill, meaſuring from the immediate baſe to the ſummit, a little more perhaps than two miles.

THE artificial fortification is neither ſtrong, nor is it compoſed of ſubſtantial materials, as is ſeen by a fiſſure of the wall, cauſed by the rains of the laſt year, and alſo by a breach that was made during the ſiege; which ſhew that the wall is chiefly compoſed of rough ſtones cemented with clay. This ſtrong hold owes its importance ſolely to its height and ſteepneſs; and had it been defended with a common ſhare of conduct and ſpirit, the capture would have been attended with much difficulty and bloodſhed. It has been ſaid indeed, that excluſively of the hazardous attempt of taking Bidgi-ghur by ſtorm, the greater part of the troops would have been deſtroyed by fevers, had they remained in that quarter a month longer. Three deep reſervoirs, excavated on the top of the hill, plentifully ſupply the garriſon with water. Some of the baſtions on the eaſtern ſide are ſupported by branches of the rock, which projecting horizontally eight or ten feet from the ſummit, holds out in the air a ſolid foundation. The proſpect around is diverſified and pictureſque, but when you throw the eye on the deep and rugged precipice beneath, the view is infinitely grand, though not diveſted of that horror, which naturally affects the mind in contemplating objects from ſo abrupt a height. The riſing and ſetting ſun at Bidgi-ghur exhibits a magnificent ſcene, and excites a train of ideas ſtrongly impreſſed with a grateful admiration of the firſt cauſe of nature. The view of the ſetting ſun takes in the river Soane, which is ſeen winding its ſtream, brightened by the rays of the weſtern light, through a long tract of diverſified country.

try.—A fort alſo appears on the ſide of a diſtant hill, which is only brought into the evening proſpect.

The village of Mow, ſituate at the bottom of the deſcent, which before the capture of Bidgi-ghur was well peopled, and poſſeſſed a conſiderable commerce, is now deſerted and in ruins. This village, whoſe loſs is ſeverely felt in many parts of the country, afforded the only mart on that quarter for ſupplying the wants of the bordering mountaineers, who reſorted thither, and bartered their wares for the produce of the low lands. Since the depopulation of Mow this commercial communication has ceaſed, and the Benares traders maintain little connection with the inhabitants of the hills, who are a hardy active race of men, and were they encouraged like thoſe of Bauglepore to enter into our ſervice, an uſeful body of ſoldiers might be acquired. They are not, it is ſaid, ſubject to that ſpecies of fever incident to a hilly country, which has operated ſo fatally on the health of our troops; nor do they entertain thoſe prejudices in their mode of living which affect the higher ranks of the Hindoos, and which have been found to embarraſs military operations. An introduction alſo of a foreign claſs of men into the army, might be conducive by its counterpoiſe, to the enſuring the fidelity of the whole body of native troops.

Bulwant Sing, through a channel of intrigue and direct diſhoneſty, qualities he notoriouſly poſſeſſed, ſeized on Bidgi-ghur, which he ſtrengthened and made the principal repoſitory of his

wealth; and Cheyt Sing,* who augmented the works and increaſed the treaſures, conſtructed a ſtrong bridge of ſtone over a ſmall river that ſkirts the bottom of the hill.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

* The Son of Bulwant Sing, and now a fugitive in the Camp of Scindia.

LET-

LETTER IV.

To T. D. F. *Allahabad, 17th Dec. 1782.*

MY DEAR SIR,

THE want of a ſubject to inform or amuſe you, was the only cauſe of my not ſooner acknowledging your long and very kind letter. You may with confidence believe, that a forgetfulneſs of the many offices of friendſhip which I have experienced at your hands, will never be claſſed in the roll of my offences, which, God knows, already is too long a one! and truſt me when I ſay, that I hold the connection which has ſo long ſubſiſted between us, as the chiefeſt honor and credit of my life.

I AM now to inform you, that having reſolved on proceeding to Europe by a northern tract, I aſſumed the name of a Georgian, for the ſake of travelling with more ſafety, and left Benares on the 12th of this month, mounted upon a ſmall horſe. After a journey of four days, or forty coſſes, in which no particular occurrence fell out, I arrived at Allahabad. About mid-way commences the territory of Oude, which is immediately diſtinguiſhed from that of Benares by its barren and deſolate aſpect. The fortreſs of Allaha-

bad, founded by Acbar,* ſtands on the point of land which forms the confluence of the Ganges and Jumma;—a ſituation beautiful as it is commodious; and in the ſeaſon of the year when the flow of water is ſpacious and rapid, exhibits a ſcene of uncommon grandeur. On one ſide, the Ganges is ſeen rolling down a ſtrong and yellow tide, and on the other, the Jumma glides with a clearer ſtream cloſe to the walls of the fort. To this favorite and ſacred ſpot a large aſſembly of Hindoos reſort at an annual period, to waſh away their ſins, and obtain permiſſion to begin a new ſcore. Theſe pilgrims, who are laid under contributions for participating this indulgence, furniſh the yearly ſum of about 50,000 rupees to the Vizier's treaſury. The fort of Allahabad, which is built of ſtone, occupies a large ſpace of ground, and has been amply ſupplied with ſuperb and uſeful buildings, whether for promoting the pleaſures or conveniences of life. The place entitled the Ghah Padſhil† is one of the beſt Mahometan manſions I have hitherto ſeen; but the want of ſuitable tenants has occaſioned great diſorders in it. The inſide of its upper room is conſtructed of marble of variegated colours, and neatly adjuſted. From this apartment, the lord of the world, as he is entitled by his ſubjects, hath a diſtinct view of twelve different ſuits of female apartments; in the front of which, when the monarch iſſues the mandate, his beau-

* This Emperor commenced his reign in A. D. 1556, and died in 1605.

† The Imperial Apartment.

teous

teous handmaids are arranged in his ſight that he may ſelect the favorite of the day. The imperial choice, or rather edict, (to what humiliations do the laws of Mahomet ſubject ye my fair friends!) is conveyed to the fortunate damſel, and full joyouſly doth her heart beat, who on the day of review attracts the fancy of her lord;—for the paſſion of vanity is ſaid oftentimes to ſupply in a female breaſt the place of love. I ſhould not diſlike, my friend, to be a Padſhah myſelf, were it not that many of them have had their throats cut by their friends, and been compelled to drink very bitter potions; ſince liable to ſuch treatment, much good may their fine ladies and other fine things do them!

In the palace yard ſtands a round pillar of about forty feet high, conſiſting of an entire ſtone, which coarſely reſembles the porphyry, and ſeems covered with an inſcription, in the ancient Hindoo character; but the letters are ſo much effaced and impaired by the ravages of time, which, my friend, ſpares not even marble, that they are become illegible. The erection of this monument is attributed to Beemſhyne, whom your Bramin will tell you, was in his day a powerful chief, and one of the principal warriors in the Mhah Bhaut.* But as a devout believer, you muſt not repoſe too much faith on the Bramin's account of the æra in which this Beemſhyne is ſaid to have flouriſhed; for he will tell you that our great progenitor was not even heard of in thoſe days. The

* The great war which was carried on by the Paunch-paun-Deve, or the compact of the five Brothers, againſt Dur-jodin. See Wilkin's Gheeta.

Maho-

Mahometans, who as furiouſly deſtroyed every monument and curious veſtige not expreſſive of their doctrine, as they were actuated by a blind zeal in its propagation and ſupport, have endeavoured to claim the conſtruction of this pillar, and over the Hindoo record, they have engraved the names of many of their emperors, ſince the time of Babr.*

This pillar, which bears the mark of great antiquity, clearly evinces that Allahabad was a place of importance long before the æra of the Mahometan conqueſt of India. We ſhould paſs indeed a contemptuous, not to ſay an unjuſt cenſure, on the underſtanding of the ancient Hindoos, did we ſuppoſe that they had overlooked a ſituation, at once ſo favourable to the performance of their religious duties, and ſo happily adapted to the enjoyments of life. Almoſt as many cities have been brought forward by modern writers to prefer their claims to the Polybortha of India, as of old, conteſted for the birth-place of Homer. Monſieur d'Anville, the celebrated French geographer, ſeems to give the palm to Allahabad. Strabo has made mention of a grand cauſeway, leading from Polybortha into the interior parts of the country, and as ſuch ſtructures are durable and conſpicuous, it is to be ſuppoſed that ſome remains of this road would have yet been viſible; but on a careful examination I could not diſcover its moſt diſtant trace. A mound of earth appears on the weſtern ſhore of the Ganges,

* The firſt Emperor of the race of Timur, who ſat on the throne of Hindoſtan.

extending

extending about a mile in a line with the river where it approaches the fort, which has been evidently thrown up to prevent the ſtream in the ſeaſons of the floods, from overflowing or injuring the town.

In touching on the ſubject of Allahabad, it is neceſſary to notice the tomb of Sultan Khuſro. This mauſoleum, about a mile to the eaſtward of the town, ſtands in the midſt of a ſpacious garden encloſed with a high wall, and well ſupplied with a variety of flower and fruit trees, but from want of culture they look rugged and barren. Being clad in the Mahometan habit, and intimating a deſire to offer up my prayers at the royal ſhrine, I was immediately admitted. The public edifices of the Mahometans being conſtructed of the worſt ſpecies of what is termed the Gothic order, they cannot afford much pleaſure to the European eye, which is now taught to regard only the more ſimple and chaſte proportions of art.* Yet the tomb of Khuſro, though compriſing few of the rules of architecture, hath in its appearance ſomething peculiarly pleaſing, and diffuſes around it an air of melancholy, congenially ſuited to the purpoſe of its foundation. The building is nearly a ſquare, raiſed from the ground by a low flight of ſteps, and has a vaulted roof in the form of a dome, whoſe outſide is covered with tiles of a fine clay, ſtained with a diverſity of colours, on which the reflection of

* This opinion does not preſume to include the monuments at Agra, which have deſerved the warmeſt approbation of our celebrated artiſts.

the

the ſun produces a pleaſing effect. No fund being eſtabliſhed for ſupporting this monument, it cannot long ſurvive the numerous edifices now ſcattered in ruins through the environs of Allahabad. Adjoining to the tomb of Khuſro, is one of a ſmaller ſize, which a mendicant informed me was erected in commemoration of one of the female branches of the imperial family. Some Mahometan prieſts who live in the garden, keep the inſide of the mauſoleum decently clean, and the different appurtenances are ſtill in good preſervation, particularly the wooden bier in which the body is ſaid to be depoſited.* Obſerving a ſmall curtain ſpread on the wall, I drew it aſide, and muſt confeſs to you that I was impreſſed with a very ſenſible awe, on diſcovering the figure of an open hand, engraved on black marble; when I adverted to the nature of the place, and the uſe to which it had been applied, I at firſt ſuppoſed that this repreſentation denoted the hand, or the power of the Deity; but a farther recollection informed me, that Mahomed, Ali, Fatima,† Huſſin, and Huſſein, were deſcribed by this emblem; and that in compliance with the law which excludes all works of ſculpture and painting from Mahometan worſhip, it had been covered.

THE Allahabad diſtricts once paid into the royal treaſury a re-

* Sultan Khuſro, the eldeſt ſon of Tehanquir, died A. D. 1622.

† Fatima, the daughter of Mahomed, was married to Ali, and had two ſons, Huſſin and Huſſein.

venue

revenue of between ſeventy and eighty lacks of rupees, but ſuch is the impoveriſhed and depopulated ſtate of the Vizier's country, that it is at this day reduced to a fourth of that amount. Shaiſtah Khan, who was appointed by Aurungzebe to govern the provinces of Bengal and Bahar after the death of Amir Jumlah,* hath left many monuments of his liberality in the vicinity of Allahabad. On an inſulated rock in the Jumna, near the city, and at a ſmall diſtance from the ſouth ſhore, he built a lofty apartment, which is cooled by the refreſhing winds of the river, and commands a diſtant and wildly diverſified view. A Perſian inſcription which I tranſcribed, ſays that Mahomed Shirreef, in the year of the Hegira, 1055,† finiſhed this airy ſeat of pleaſure by order of Shaiſtah Khan.—But from great men and their ſplendid works, let me deſcend to more trivial concerns, and to ſome account of my private adventures.

INDIA, you know, hath ever been famed for affording convenient places of accomodation to the traveller, who at the diſtance of eight and ten miles, ſeldom fails meeting with a public lodging, or a reſervoir of water, where he may perform his ablutions, and quench his thirſt. As the greater part of the inhabitants of India, from a ſimplicity of life, and the clement ſtate of their climate, have but few ſuperfluous wants; a ſlight defence

* The officer employed by Aurungzebe to oppoſe Sultan Shujah.

† A. D. 1645.

againſt the ſun and rain, a ſmall portion of cloathing, with plain food, conſtitute a large ſhare of their real ones. In upper India, the œconomy of Karawan Serah,* or as it is uſually called the Serauce, is conducted by better regulations, and its conveniencies more ſenſible felt, than in the ſouthern parts of India. An incloſed area, the interior ſides of which contain ſmall apartments, fronting inwards with a principal gate-way, is appropriated in every village of note, to the uſe of travellers.† The ſtationary tenants of the ſerauce,‡ many of them women, and ſome of them very pretty, approach the traveller on his entrance, and in alluring language deſcribe to him the various excellencies of their ſeveral lodgings. When the choice is made, (which is often perplexing, ſo many are the inducements thrown out on all ſides of him) a bed § is laid out for his repoſe—a ſmoaking pipe is brought, and the utenſils cleaned, for preparing his repaſt. The neceſſary

* Keravanſerah is a Perſee and Arabic compound of *Kar*, ſignifying buſineſs, *rawan* the participle of the verb rufteen, to go, move, proceed, &c. and of *ſerah*, an habitation. The Tucktravan, a vehicle uſed by travellers in many parts of Aſia, is compoſed of the words, *tuckt*, a ſeat, or board, and the aforementioned participle. I have ventured to inſert theſe etymologies for the uſe of thoſe who are not converſant in the Perſian Language.

† Shere Shah, who drove Humaim from the throne of Delhi, in 1542, is ſaid to have been the firſt Mahometan who eſtabliſhed Karavanſerahs in India. This fact, alſo recorded in Dow's hiſtory, is well known amongſt the natives.—Shere Shah built the fort of Rhotas, and the mauſoleum of Saſſeram.

‡ The ſerauces at this day are uſually given in rent.

§ This piece of furniture, of very ſimple conſtruction, has low feet, with the ſides and ends formed of bamboo or common rough wood, and the bottom of laced cords.

ſum

him is delivered into the hands generally of a girl, who procures the materials, and dreſſes his meal in a moſt expeditious manner. For two domeſtics and myſelf, the horſe and his keeper, the whole of my dayly expenditure amounted to a ſum, which as you will not credit, I will not venture to note; and on days when I was inclined to feaſt, the addition of two or three pence procured a ſumptuous fare, with the accompanyment of a ſauce, which an alderman over his callipaſh might ſigh for.

Adieu, my dear Sir,

I am Your's, &c. &c.

LETTER V.

To I. D. F. *Lucknow, 1ſt January, 1783.*

MY DEAR SIR,

MY laſt letter to you written from Allahabad, contained ſome deſcription of that place, with a farrago of deſultory remarks ariſing from the moment, and haſtily thrown together; but ſhould the peruſal have given a little amuſement or information, I will contentedly ſacrifice any claims to genius or method.—The following gives the detail of my journey from Allahabad to Lucknow, and though containing no matter of any ſubſtance, may afford you half an hour's relaxation.

ON the 20th of December,—after attending at the funeral ceremony performed in commemoration of Huſſin and Huſſein, or rather of the latter, I left Allahabad, and went no farther that day than Beghum* Serauce, a ſtation of three coſſes.† I will curſorily

* Beghum is the feminine gender of Begh, as Khanum is that of Khan, both titles of Tartar extraction: the latter has been often adopted by the female branches of the imperial family of Timur.

† Two Britiſh miles may be given to the average meaſurement of a coſs.

embrace

embrace this occaſion of informing you, that Huſſin and Huſſein, were the ſons of Ali, the ſon-in-law and nephew of the Arabian prophet. During the war which the firſt Mahomet maintained againſt the Infidels, (ſo the profeſſor of the new faith denominated thoſe of a different creed), Huſſin was poiſoned, and Huſſein was ſlain in battle. They conſequently became martyrs;—and the tomb of Huſſein, which was erected in the vicinity of Bagdat, is held by the Sheahs* in the ſame degree of veneration, with that of their prophet, by the other Mahometan ſectaries.

On the 21ſt, eat my breakfaſt and ſmoaked my pipe at Tutty-pour, or the place of victory. On enquiry why a village ſo mean and ſmall, had been diſtinguiſhed by ſo great a name, I was told, that in former times, ſome ſignal victory had been obtained there; but my intelligencer knew nothing of the parties concerned.—In the evening, having this day travelled ſix coſſes, I halted at Alum Chund, the north-weſt limit of the Allahabad diſtricts. The country had a barren and deſolate aſpect; the cauſe of which was aſcribed to the rapacity of a former renter. On entering the ſerauce, I found the hoſts with their ſpouſes, buſily occupied in the celebration of a marriage. Whether it was owing to the rare occurrence of this ſpecies of ceremony, (for they are a people as void of reſtraint or form as any under the ſun) or whether previous difficulties had till now obſtructed the union, I will not pretend

* The Mahometans of the ſect of Ali, are ſo called.

to

to determine; but the joy and merriment which circulated in their aſſembly, could not be ſurpaſſed. The men were collected in a body, drinking arrack, and beating a tom-tom;* and the women, in a ſeparate *coterie*, were chewing betle, and ſpeaking very loud and quick. Though this jubilee had engroſſed a great ſhare of their attention, they gave me a good ſupper, and a comfortable lodging.

On the 22d,—I arrived at the Kurrah Manickpour,—eight coſſes and an half. In my way, I halted during the heat of the day at the ſerauce of Shahzadpour, which together with the town, is ſaid to have been built by the Shaiſtah Khan,† mentioned in my laſt letter. This nobleman, according to Bernier, was highly celebrated for his eloquence, and elegant ſtyle of writing, which it is thought contributed to promote the early ſucceſs of Aurungzebe. The ſerauce of Shahzadpour, built chiefly of brick and mortar, has ſpacious and commodious apartments, but from want of repair, one angle of it has fallen into ruins. It is ſeriouſly to be lamented, that edifices founded on principles of ſuch public ſpirit, or motives equally beneficial to the ſtate, and whoſe uſes are ſo univerſally felt, ſhould be ſuffered to moulder into decay. It would ſeem, that when the larger ſerauces were firſt founded, certains portions of land, or other eſtabliſhed funds, were ſet apart for keeping them in

* A ſmall drum.

† He was the maternal uncle of Aurungzebe.

neceſſa

neceſſary order: but ſuch has been the diſtracted ſtate of Hindoſtan for theſe later periods, and ſuch the oppreſſions, or perhaps poverty of its rulers, that theſe grants have either been reſumed, or diverted into other channels. In ſtigmatizing any ſpecific claſs of men, I believe I have committed an error; for on a more diſpaſſionate view, a large ſhare of cenſure falls on the people at large. In India, oſtentation, ſelf-love, vanity, or whatever term may be beſt fitted to the paſſion whoſe effects I mean to deſcribe, has uſurped as powerful a ſway over the minds of the people, as in any circle of the globe; and it is exemplified in various ſhapes, but in none more than in the foundation of public works. On obſerving once, a Hindoo of ſome diſtinction ſuperintending the conſtruction of a place of worſhip, I aſked him why, in a country famed for its charitable benefactions, ſo many old edifices allotted to the purpoſes of religion and hoſpitality were permitted to fall to the ground, which, had they been repaired, large ſums of money would have been ſaved, and many a valuable monument of antiquity reſcued from oblivion. He candidly told me, that were he to expend his whole eſtate on repairs, the work would ſtill retain the name of its original founder; but by the erection of a new one, it would be tranſmitted to poſterity in his own. By this regiſter of fame, it ſhould ſeem that the entire credit of conſtructing a pagoda, pond, or ſerauce, will be given to him who firſt raiſed the fabric, and no account taken of the occaſional embelliſher of ſuch ſtructures.—This digreſſion hath prevented me from ſooner informing

you,

you, that to-day I loſt my road; inſtead of ſimply going to Manickpour, my place of deſtination, I went to Kurrah Manickpour, where I paſſed a very unpleaſant night. The air was intenſely cold, and my ſervants who purſued the right road, carried with them my baggage and my purſe. The good woman at the ſerai was old, though very active, kindly provided a ſupper at the riſk of not being paid, for I had adviſed her of the miſcarriage; but ſhe could procure no ſuccedaneum for a quilt, ſo that I was kept ſhiveringly awake the whole night.

ADJOINING to the village of Kurrah Manickpour, on a hill, are the remains of a conſiderable fort. Amongſt the ruins I obſerved ſome mutilated fragments of Hindoo ſculpture, of the ſame ſtyle as that ſeen on a curious monument of ancient date in the neighbourhood of Benares. Feſtoons of flowers are ſculptured on this monument, which for the ſimple elegancy of the deſign and taſte, as well as the exact nicety of the execution, may, in my opinion, vie with the works of European maſters. The Hindoos of this day have a ſlender knowledge of the rules of proportion, and none of perſpective. They are juſt imitators, and correct workmen; but they poſſeſs merely the glimmerings of genius.*

On the 23d, croſſed the Ganges at Gootree, two miles below

* This obſervation is verified at a village oppoſite the city of Benares, at the gardens of Ramnagur, where Cheyt Sing has erected a large range of coſtly buildings, in ſome of which ſtone figures are placed, of very aukward dimenſions and dull expreſſion.

Kurrah

Kurrah Manickpour, and arrived at Muſtaphabad, a ſtage of nine coſſes. Almas Ali Khan is the manager or renter of a large tract of country lying on the ſouth of the Ganges, which appears in a leſs deſolate ſtate than any other part of the Vizier's dominions which I have ſeen. From the ruins of Kurrah fort, the Ganges is ſeen winding beautifully round the bottom of the hill, and on the northern ſhore, immediately oppoſite, ſtands the village of Manickpour. I found my ſervants at Muſtaphabad, to whom I referred the hoſpitable hoſteſs, who had been obliged to accompany me ſo far, for payment of the laſt night's ſcore.

On the 24th,—at Bareily, a fortified town, 12 coſſes. The country from the laſt ſtation is much covered with jungle,* and where the proſpect opened, but little cultivation appeared, except in the diſtricts of Almas, which are but comparatively well conditioned. I have ſeen only a land of deſolation, exhibiting the ſcattered veſtiges of former proſperity.

On the 25th,—at Doolindy, 8 coſſes. The principal town of a diſtrict, rented by one of the Viziers favorite Hindoos, who has laid out a large garden at this place, in which are two neat ſummer houſes.

On the 26,—at Saſeindy, 10 coſſes. There is little elſe to note than the wild appearance of a barren country; the reverſe of what I expected to ſee in the vicinity of a capital city.

* All foreſt wood in India, is termed *jungle*.

On the 27th, at Lucknow, 8 coſſes. I took a lodging in the Aſſroff ſerauce, and to prevent as much as poſſible the riſk of diſcovery, I diſcharged all my ſervants, except one, on whom I could place a reaſonable confidence.

Lucknow is a large and populous city, but wholly inelegant and irregular. The ſtreets are narrow, uneven, and almoſt choaked up with every ſpecies of filth. The Goomty, running on the north ſide of the town, is navigable for boats of a common ſize at all ſeaſons of the year, and falls into the Ganges between Bénares and Ghazepour. A line of boats, extended acroſs the river, forms a convenient communication with a large ſuburb. Shujah-al-Dowlah made Fyzeabad, or Oude, the capital of his dominion; but his ſon, ſetting aſide that, with many other of his father's arrangements, has fixed his reſidence at Lucknow.

Perceiving that ſome of my neighbours began to make inquiſitive remarks, I went acroſs the water, and procured a retired and commodious apartment in the Huſſen Gunge ſerauce. Having ſome buſineſs to tranſact at Lucknow, previouſly to my journey to Europe, I left my ſervants at the ſerauce, on pretence of viſiting the Engliſh camp, the general rendezvous of idle ſtrangers, and went to the city. Being deſirous of ſeeing a gentleman, who I underſtood was ſtationed there, I approached the door of an officer's quarter, and deſired the ſervants to acquaint their maſter, that a Moghul merchant, of whom there are many at Lucknow, requeſted permiſſion to ſee him. Though the entreaty was

urged

urged in the ſofteſt and moſt perſuaſive tone within the compaſs of my ſpeech, they flatly and roughly rejected it, ſaying that their maſter was eating his breakfaſt. Anxious to obtain the wanted information, I tried another door which ſeemed leſs cloſely guarded, but there alſo my prayer was prefered in vain; and having nothing in my pocket to ſtrengthen the argument, I was obliged to retire; though the day was extremely hot, and the diſtance to my lodging was at leaſt four miles. This occurence, however productive of temporary inconvenience, gave me a ſatisfactory proof of the efficacy of my diſguiſe, and the fluency of my Mahometan language. Many, I dare ſay, are the unfortunate plaintiffs in our Indian world, who unable to purchaſe a paſſage through the gates of the great, are thruſt away by their rude and rapacious domeſtics.—In returning, I ſaw another European houſe, into which, by a fortunate change in the mode of application, I procured admittance: for on informing the door-keeper that my attendance had been required, I was immediately conducted to his maſter, who received me in the kindeſt manner, and on many future occaſions ſhewed me marks of his friendſhip.—During my ſtay at Lucknow I lodged at the ſerauce, and though I remained there twenty days, in which time I made many viſits to the Engliſh gentlemen, no one ſeemed to regard me with ſuſpicion. My landlady at firſt expreſſed a ſtrong deſire of knowing the cauſe of my frequent excurſions; but not receiving a ſatisfactory account, ſhe concluded that I had formed ſome female intimacy. As this con-

jecture was favourable to my plan, I encouraged it in the mind of the good woman, who gave herſelf infinite credit for the diſcovery.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your's, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER VI.

Lucknow, January 16th, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

BEFORE I leave the territories of Aſſoff-ud-Dowlah, or, as he is often entitled from the rank he holds, the Vizier of the Empire, I will throw together for your peruſal ſome brief remarks on the Oude government.

THIS country is bounded on the north, by parts of Napaul and Siranagur; on the eaſt, by the Engliſh poſſeſſions; on the ſouth, by the Jumna; and on the weſt, generally by the Doab, and the Ganges. The Oude territories, generally flat and fertile, are watered by the Ganges, Jumna, Gograh, Goomty, and Gunduck, excluſive of many rivulets. Theſe rivers flow through moſt of the principal towns, and interſect a large ſpace of the country; moſt of them being navigable for boats, in all ſeaſons of the year. —THE Engliſh armies may be plentifully ſupplied with proviſions and ammunition, in the event of executing any military operation in that quarter. Theſe rivers alſo preſent ſtrong barriers againſt the Mahrattah, Seick, or Moghul cavalry. The Vizier's provinces, which yield, it is ſaid, at this period, a revenue of about two millions

lions ſterling, have greatly decreaſed in produce ſince the death of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. It would be preſumptuous in me to attempt an explanation of ſuch decreaſe. It was ſufficiently mortifying, to obſerve the common effects of a deſtructive adminiſtration. The inhabitants ſay, that the population of the country is diminiſhed, and that the commerce, which in former periods was important and extenſive, has fallen to decay. Theſe evils which have contributed to the ruin of the moſt powerful ſtates, and are now precipitating the ruin of Oude, can only be eradicated by the ſtrenuous exertions of a juſt and wiſe governor: a character devoutly to be wiſhed for in Oude. It appears, that a large portion of the amount now paid by Aſſoff-ud-Dowlah into the Company's treaſury at Lucknow, is tranſported from thence in ſpecie to relieve the neceſſities of Bengal, now urgent in the extreme. Much of the wealth alſo, which has been accumulated by the ſervants of the Company reſiding in this country, has been conveyed in a ſimilar mode; and the miſchief gathers ſtrength from the tenor of our preſent connection with Aſſoff-ud-Dowlah. The channels of commerce operate too tardily for meaſures which require diſpatch, and embrace only the object of the day. If treaſure can be procured, no ſecondary aids are called in; no ſuccedaneum is ſearched for. Theſe drains, unſupplied by any native ſource, muſt ſoon exhauſt the vigour of a country, where in addition to the grievance, commerce is loaded with monopoly, and influenced by the hand of power. The demand for bills on Bengal, which has been preſſing and continued,

tinued, gave them often a value of ſeventeen and an half per cent. on the Lucknow amount; a profit which enabled the bankers to export the value in ſilver.* — The reſumption of the Jaguir, or alienated lands, has not been productive of the promiſed benefits. The officers who enjoyed thoſe benefactions, were many of them men of expenſive manners; they promoted the conſumption of valuable manufactures, and poſſeſſing rank and diſtinction, they maintained a numerous body of dependants. Whether from a ſucceſſion of oppreſſive managers, or that the inhabitants do not experience the fruits of former liberality, it is evidently ſeen, that the reſumed diſtricts are ill cultivated, and thinly inhabited.

LITTLE remains to be ſaid of the Vizier's military eſtabliſhment; it being only uſeful in aſſiſting the collection of the revenue, enforcing the obedience of the leſſer vaſſals, or furniſhing a guard for his perſon. The defence of the country wholly reſts on the forces of the Engliſh, which are ſupplied according to emergency. The troops at this time, amount to about eight thouſand ſepoys, and five hundred Europeans, with the requiſite train of artillery. The treaſury of Aſſoff-ud-Dowlah is now low, but it is ſaid, that he has nearly paid off the reſidue of a large debt, which had been accumulating ſince the period of his father's death. It is to be ſincerely wiſhed, that the meaſures purſued in future, may redreſs

* A flow of commerce, which now more diffuſely conveys the manufactures of this country to Bengal, has reduced this premium to four per cent.

the

the grievances of this country; which though of ſuch extenſive compaſs, and poſſeſſing ſo valuable a reſource, bears the aſpect of rapid decay: and though its poſition, and native weakneſs, might render the alliance profitable to the Engliſh, no ſolid benefits have hitherto ariſen from our connection with Oude.

I am, Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER VII.

Furruckabad, January 26th, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

I NOW beg to preſent you with a ſketch of my route to Furruckabad, where I purpoſe reſting two or three days with my countrymen, whom I ſhall not probably ſee again until my arrival in Europe.

On the 18th at noon, I left my hoſteſs's quarters at Lucknow, and after a warm and duſty ride of ſeven coſſes, halted at the village of Nowill Gunge. The next day I arrived at Meahgunge, a ſtage alſo of ſeven coſſes, and was much rejoiced to find that my little ſteed continued to poſſeſs high health and vigor. He is endowed, I fear, with a too great predominance of the latter quality, and that in its worſt ſenſe; for if I am to judge from his carnal hankerings, and ſtrong neighings of love to every mare he ſees, it would too plainly appear that his life has not been of the chaſteſt kind. But as it is ſaid, and in holy writ I believe, "that there is no wiſdom under the girdle," meaning, evidently, the girdles of the lords and ladies of the creation, we may ſurely excuſe

excuſe the wanderings and frailties of a poor horſe, whoſe paſſions receive no check from conſtitutional modeſty, or virtuous example.

MEAHGUNGE, if I am informed right, was founded by Almas, and ſeems to be a thriving and populous village. From the various intelligence which I have procured, it is evident that the renter here is active, induſtrious, and regular. The inhabitants ſay, that his rigour in collecting the revenue is, in a certain degree, qualified by a ſteady obſervance of his contracts.—I paſſed this evening in the company of a Patan, who was returning to his home from Lucknow, where he had expended the greateſt part of his eſtate in the ſociety of the ladies, and in the pleaſures of arrack; but in the laſt he very copiouſly indulged. In the courſe of two hours and a half, I beheld him with amazement empty two bottles of a ſpirit ſo harſh and fiery, that the like doſe muſt have turned the head of an elephant. The Patan made an apology for this exceſſive potation, by obſerving, that it removed from his mind every ſenſation of ſorrow and melancholy,—paſſions, which, he ſaid greatly annoyed him in his cooler moments. This jovial Mahometan was attended by an old muſician, marvelloufly ill apparelled, and deficient in the larger portion of his teeth, who during the interludes of his maſter's amuſement, ſtrummed on a miſerable guitar, which he accompanied with ſome of Hafez's odes; but uttered in a voice that would have ſtruck diſmay into the fierceſt beaſt that ranges the foreſt.

—At

—At this gunge, a ſervant whom I hired at Lucknow, and my only attendant, carried off, in the night, my matchlock and a curious dagger.

On the 20th, at Banghur Mow—10 coſſes—a large village in the diſtrict of Almas.—Here the Patan having drunk out all the ſubſtance of his purſe, ſold a piece of family tin-plate; the produce of which raiſed the ſum of three rupees. He took that evening an extraordinary draught of his favourite ſpirit; and, that his pleaſures might have no alloy, he called in a good-natured girl, who for one half-rupee diſplayed to the Patan a more ample fund of dalliance and allurement, than could be purchaſed by us for twenty at Lucknow.—He expreſſed a ſovereign contempt for Almas,* who he ſaid being precluded from the pleaſures of the ſex, diſliked and diſcouraged them. Many of Almas's wounded ſepoys were brought into the ſerauce from a fort in the woods, which had been reduced by him after a ſiege of ſix weeks. Theſe men were ſhockingly mangled.—Some had balls lodged in their bodies, others were ſcorched by a combuſtible matter thrown on them during the attack.—Being poſſeſſed of a few medical materials, I applied dreſſings to ſuch caſes as could likely receive any benefit from the aſſiſtance; and I was pleaſed to obſerve the ſucceſsful effects of ſome of the applications. The want of chirurgical help is an evil which affects, in a grievous manner, the native military ſervice of Hindoſtan, eſpecially ſince

* He is a eunuch.

the uſe of fire-arms has become ſo prevalent; and it will be no exaggeration to ſay, that a greater number of the country troops are deſtroyed by the effects of wounds, than ſlain in immediate action.

AFTER a long journey of 14 coſſes, in which I croſſed the Ganges, and had nearly exhauſted the ſtrength of my horſe, I arrived on the 21ſt at the ancient city of Kinnouge, ſituate on the Callinuady, a ſmall river that falls into the Ganges, about twenty miles below Furruckabad. Kinnouge, before the period of the Mahometan conqueſt, ranked amongſt the moſt populous and opulent cities of Hindoſtan. It is mentioned in teſtimony of its grandeur, that Kinnouge contained thirty thouſand ſhops for the ſale of betle, and afforded employment for ſix thouſand female dancers, and muſicians.—A vaſt maſs of ruins interſperſed through a wide ſpace, marks the ancient extent and grandeur of Kinnouge, though few diſtinct veſtiges now exiſt, except ſome parts of a ſtone temple erected in ancient times to the honor of Setah, the wife of Ram, which has been exorciſed by ſome zealous Mahometan, and converted into a place of worſhip. The preſent race of Indian Mahometans not being fervent in the cauſe of religion, or being rather ſupinely regardleſs of it, (many of them holding the memory of Mahomet in as little reverence as they would that of Thomas-a-Becket, had they ever heard of him) the moſque is now defiled and abandoned. In ſeveral cavities which the rain has formed, I obſerved parts of brick wall, ſunk twenty feet at leaſt beneath

beneath the level of the town; and the inhabitants ſay, that in digging into the foundation, ſmall pieces of gold and ſilver are often diſcovered. They alſo ſay, that Kinnouge was once deſtroyed by an inundation; but as few Hindoo records are diveſted of mythological ſtory, ſlender uſes only can be derived from them. The Mahrattas plundered this city, and laid waſte the adjacent country, previouſly to the battle of Panifrett.* After this important event, which gave a ſtrength and permanency to the Mahometan power in Upper India, Ahmed Khan Bungiſh, the chief of Furruckabad, took poſſeſſion of the diſtricts of Kinnouge, which during his adminiſtration, began to emerge from the ruin in which it had been long involved, and aſſumed ſymptoms of a recovery which are now wholly effaced.

ARRIVED on the 23d at Khodah Gunge,—nine coſſes,—a village in the territory of Muzzuffer Jung, the adopted ſon of Ahmed Khan: but no more like the father,—excuſe the phraſe,—than "I am like Hercules."—This young man, averſe to, or incapable of buſineſs, is a tributary of Aſſof-ud-Dowlah, who by the high fine he has impoſed on Furruckabad, may be ſaid to govern it himſelf.

ON the 24th,—at Furruckabad—nine coſſes.—Finding the pleaſures of my Patan friend grow expenſive, and very noiſy, I

* It was fought in February, 1761.

took

took an eaſy leave of him, and ſlipped unperceived into the Engliſh artillery camp, where I am treated, as I have been in all parts of this hoſpitable country, with every mark of kindneſs.

I am, my Dear Sir,

Yours, &c. &c.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

Rampore, February 5th, 1783.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE deſire on every occaſion of teſtifing the ſenſe I entertain of your friendſhip, prompts me to give you the relation of my route from Furruckabad to Rampore.

THE progreſs of the firſt day, the 29th January, 1783, which was a long one,—not leſs than eighteen coſſes,—brought me and my horſe, both greatly jaded, to Kytterah; a large village on the weſt ſide of the Ganges.

THE next day at Allahapour,—nine coſſes.—This place not being a common ſtage, nor containing a ſerauce, my accommodations were ſlender, and thoſe extorted by the force of bold language, and a few extra pence. At Allahapour there is only one houſe of entertainment, and that for the article of eating only;—you may ſleep where you can. After ſupper, I propoſed to the landlady with every token of decorum, that we ſhould lodge that night under the ſame roof. The dame miſconſtruing the purpoſe of my requeſt, and fired with indigna-

tion

tion at the idea of its indecency, poured on me a torrent of reproach. In the exercise of the tongue a female of Hindostan hath few equals; and if she hath ever followed a camp, I would pronounce her invincible on any ground in Europe. An English woman, educated at our most noted seminaries, and skilled in all the various compass of debate, will, perhaps, on some interesting occasion, maintain the contest for an hour, which then terminates in blows and victory. But an Indian dame, improved by a few campaigns, has been known to wage a colloquial war, without introducing one manual effort, for the space of three successive days; sleeping and eating at reasonable intervals.* There is a fertility of imagination, a power of expression, inherent in the mind, and vocal ability, of an Asiatic, particularly a female one, which cannot be engendered in the cold head of an European: and there is an extent of language also peculiar to the East, which the limits of Western speech do not contain.—Let me not forget the story of my landlady, whose words, shrill and piercing, yet seem to vibrate in my ear.—With every symptom of a virulent female pride, and the semblance of outrageous virtue, she declared that I should not sleep under her roof.—I might, if I liked, place my bed on the out-side of the door.—Finding the night growing cold, and not being impressed with sentiments of respect for mine hostess, whose

* Such prolonged engagements are distinguished by the particular term of "*baxsy Lerhay*," or the stale war.

person

perſon had nothing lovely in it, I planted my bed ſomewhat rudely in the midſt of her apartment, telling her, ſhe might diſpoſe of herſelf as ſhe deemed moſt fitting, but that my deportment would be chaſte, and conſiſtent with the rules of honor, though appearances might be unfavourable. The good woman perceiving my inattention to her clamorous repreſentation, was glad to compound the matter, and take a ſmall pecuniary compenſation, for the injury her character might ſuffer.

On the next day I went to Badam, a ſtation of eight coſſes.—Badam is ſaid to have been founded four hundred years ago, by one of the Seljukian kings, and from a magnificent extenſive city, is now ſunk into a ſmall mouldering town. The ruins of the fort ſtill ſerve to exhibit a mortifying picture of former grandeur; but ſuch is the reverſe of its condition, that the howling wolf, and the ſcreeching owl, now become its only tenants, have ſupplanted the gay damſel, and the care ſoothing minſtrel. Then, my friend, 'ere thy youthful blood ceaſes to run lightly through its now elaſtic channels,—ere thy mind refuſes longer to receive the glowing tints of fancy's pencil,—ſeize the fair pleaſures of the hour, and following the precepts of our Hafez, leave the reſt to fate! —I paſſed this evening in the company of the fair, (though the epithet may not literally apply to our Indian ladies), who, for a moderate offering, ſung, laughed, and danced around me until mid-night.

On the 1ſt of February, after a tedious journey of fourteen

coſſes, leading through a lonely unhoſpitable country, I arrived at Owlah.—Of the few fellow-travellers purſuing the the ſame track, two wolves, a fox, and two hares, compoſed the greater number. The ſhrubs and high graſs had ſo concealed the path, that I was completely bewildered, and had loſt my way, when a ſmall village on an eminence attracted my notice, and held out the proſpect of relief: but ſuch is the inſtability of ſublunary pleaſure, that this promiſing mark proved a falſe beacon. The hamlet was unroofed, and its inhabitants had ſought a more friendly land. Then, in the bitterneſs of my heart, I gave up Shujah-ud-Dowlah to as many devils as choſe to take him, and was about conſigning the Engliſh to the ſame crew, for having expelled from a country which they had made populous and opulent, the extenſive tribe of Rohillas. How inſatiable, cruel, and how deſtructive, even of its own purpoſes, appears ambition, when placed in this light. It prompted a prince, already poſſeſſed of an ample fair territory, to ſeize, with barely the colour of pretence, the domain of his neighbours, who by a ſalutary ſyſtem of government, had enriched their country, and had made their names reſpected. The conqueror, by the fortune of war, ſubjects into a province this flouriſhing territory, which is ſoon converted into deſolate plains, and deſerted villages. This is not, I truſt, the language of exaggeration, or the colouring of fancy. It is a ſimple, grievous truth, forcing itſelf on the notice of the moſt curſory obſerver.—The town of Owlah, once crowded with inhabitants, and adorned with moſques and ſpacious buildings,

buildings, is now verging to ruin, and many of its ſtreets are choaked up with fallen habitations.

On the 2d of February, at Shahabad,—fourteen coſſes,—a large village in the diſtricts of Fyze-ullah-Khan. The whole of this chief's country evinces the beneficial effects ariſing from the encouragement of huſbandry, and the aid of an active government. Populous villages, ſkirted by extenſive fields of corn, are ſeen on all ſides; and the haughty independent ſpirit which invariably pervades every claſs of the people, mark their abhorrence of deſpotiſm. Many of the Rohillas, who had been driven from the country after the death of Hafiz Rhamut, have ſettled in this quarter.

On the 3d, at Rampour,—fourteen coſſes. Fyze-ullah-Khan, reſides in this town, which the general reſort of his civil and military officers, has now made populous, and wealthy.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your's, &c. &c.

[The following hiſtory of the Rohillas, and Shujah-ud-Dowlah, compiled ſince the date of the letters, is founded on ſundry original documents, and various local information, obtained during my reſidence in the northern parts of India, and has been introduced in this place, though interrupting the ſeries of the letters, to bring into one view, a body of relative facts.]

HISTORY

OF THE

ROHILLAS.*

IT appears, that about the year 1720, Bisharut Khan, and Daoud Khan, of the tribe of Rohillas, accompanied by a small number of their needy and adventurous countrymen came into Hindostan in quest of military service. They were first entertained by a Madar Saha, the Hindoo chief of Scrouly,† who, by robbery and predatory excursions, maintained a large party of banditti. In the plunder of an adjacent village, Daoud Khan

* This appellation, I have been informed, is derived from *Roh*, a word in the Afghan language signifying a hill or mountain; and is the name also of a certain tract of territory, the native country of the Rohillas, situated between Peshour and Cabul.

† A small town in the north-west quarter of Rohilcund.

captured

captured a youth of the Jatt ſect,* whom he adopted, and brought up in the Mahometan faith, by the name of Ali Mahomet; and though he had children born to him in marriage, Daoud Khan diſtinguiſhed this boy by pre-eminent marks of parental affection. Madar Saha aſſigned to the body of Rohillas, which ſoon increaſed, certain lands† for their maintenance. Goolareah and ſome other villages, were given to Biſharut Khan; and Daoud Khan obtained Burneah and Beouly.‡

WHILST the Rohillas were yet in this limited ſtate, Shah Alum Khan, an Afghan Mollah,§ viſited his countrymen in India; and it is ſaid that he had particular claims of friendſhip on Daoud Khan, being either the adoptive father of that chief, or having afforded him in his youth the means of ſubſiſtence. In whatever relation the Mollah ſtood to Daoud Khan, it is allowed that he was hoſpitably treated at Beouly; and on returning to Afghaniſtan, was furniſhed with a ſum of money for defraying the expences of his journey. Shah Alum came a ſecond time to Kuthair,‖ where

* This ſect, a numerous and powerful one in the northern parts of India, is claſſed in the fourth, or Sooder, tribe of the Hindoos.

† The Rohilla officers who ſtood next in authority to thoſe chiefs, were Caim Khan, Shadie Khan, Permaul Khan, Sultan Khan, and Azum Khan Dhunghiah.

‡ Villages ſituated in the diſtricts of Sullauſee, a diviſion of Rohilcund, which lies 40 computed miles to the weſtward of Bareily.—See Rennel's map.

§ Mollah is an appellation given to thoſe who are ſkilled in the religious doctrine and laws of Mahomet.

‖ The original name of a part of Rohilcund, previouſly to the period of the Rohilla conqueſt, and ſtill adopted in the public regiſters of the country.

he

he again experienced the generoſity of Daoud Khan; but on going back to his country, he was killed, and his effects were plundered. It has been ſaid, that this aſſaſſination was committed at the inſtigation of Daoud Khan, in revenge of ſome haughty expreſſions of the Mollah to that chief. I have been wholly prompted to make this mention of Alum Khan, from his being the father of Hafiz Rhamut, who in latter times became ſo conſpicuous and unfortunate.

The Rohillas, quarrelling with Madar Saha, retired from his country, and aſſociating themſelves with Chand Khan, the chief of Bareily,* they jointly entered into the ſervice of Azmuth Khan, the Governor of Moradabad.† They did not remain long attached to this officer, but moving towards the northern mountains they made incurſions into the territory of the Rajah of Cummaioun. Chand Khan had previouſly refuſed to proceed on this expedition with the Rohillas, who after various ſucceſs, were wholly worſted. The Rohillas had penetrated into the interior country, but being ſurrounded on all ſides by the mountaineers, who cut off their ſupply of proviſion, they were compelled to ſubmit to diſgraceful terms of releaſement. The perſons of Daoud

* Bareily, a ſpacious well built town, in the centre of Rohilcund.—See Rennel's map.

† A town formerly of great note, ſituate in the northern part of Rohilcund.—See Rennel's map.

‡ A ſpacious tract of mountainous country, ſubject to a Hindoo Chief; and forming the north-eaſt boundary of Rohilcund.

Khan,

Khan, and Ali Mahomet, were delivered to the Rajah, who put the former to death; and the like fate would have awaited the ſon, had he not made his eſcape. The Rohillas ſay, that Daoud Khan was not ſurrendered to the chief of Cummaioun, but ſlain by a party of mountaineers, who had attacked him by ſurprize. The Rohilla party after this diſaſter withdrew to Beouly and Burneah, where they had, antecedently to the Cummaioun expedition, lodged their families; and in a ſhort ſpace of time it is ſeen, that they ſeized on the diſtricts of Madar Saha, their firſt maſter, who fell in one of the deſultory actions that followed this invaſion. Ali Mahomet, after the death of Daoud Khan, had been declared chief* of the party; nor did he, though then a youth, ſeem unworthy of the charge. He was brave, enterprizing, and never failed to improve the occaſions of advancing his power and enlarging his territory.—An eunuch who reſided at Munounah,† and managed the affairs of thoſe omrahs of the court who held granted lands in Kuthair, had incited Ali Mahomet, from ſome motive of reſentment, to invade the poſſeſſions of the chief of Owlah; which were ſoon reduced by the Rohillas, and ultimately an-

* Mahomet Khan, the ſon of Daoud Khan, either from being ſuperſeded in his father's affection by Ali Mahomet, or at the period of Daoud Khan's death, being excluded by the Rohilla officers from the ſucceſſion, retired to Furruckabad, where he was received into the Bungliſh family. It is mentioned alſo in a manuſcript which I have ſeen, that at the time of his father's death, Mahomet Khan was an infant, and that he remained ſome years in the family of Ali Mahomet.

† A town in Rohilcund.

nexed

nexed to their territory. Ali Mahomet found, which he had ſought for, a pretext to quarrel with the eunuch, whom he engaged,* and ſlew in a pitched battle; the ſucceſs of which, inveſted him with the eſtates of the nobles, and a large booty. Ali Mahomet, chiefly by the aſſiſtance of the Vizier Kummer ud Dein, not only made his peace at court, but obtained a commiſſion for collecting the revenue of the penſion lands, which it is ſaid he punctually remitted.†

FROM this period, may be dated the firſt important eſtabliſhment of the Rohilla power in Rohilcund; a name by which they diſtinguiſhed the Kuthair diſtricts, and their other territories on the eaſt ſide of the Ganges. Azmut Ulla Khan‡ being removed from the government of Moradabad, Hunund, an Hindoo officer of note, was ordered to proceed to that place, and exterminate the government of the Rohillas. It appears, that Omdut Ul Muick,§ a powerful omrah at the court of Mahomet Shah, adviſed and promoted this meaſure, in revenge of the death of the eunuch, who had been his agent in the management of an extenſive Jaguir,

* The battle in which the eunuch was ſlain, happened in 1727.

† An act of ſuch avowed rebellion, committed within almoſt the precincts of the court, marks an epocha of the decline of the Mogul Empire, and conſpicuouſly ſhews, that the power and vigor which had rendered its arms invincible under Acbar, and Aurungzebe, no longer exiſted.

‡ In ſome papers recording Rohilla hiſtory, it is mentioned, that Azmut Ullah was forcibly deprived of his Government by Ali Mahomet.

§ This officer was alſo known by the name of Amir Khan.

which he held in the diſtricts of Munownah and Owlah. The forces of Hunund were encountered by the Rohillas under the command of Ali Mahomet,* and wholly defeated. Hunund, together with his ſon, fell in battle; and the diſtricts of Moradabad, with thoſe of Bareily, were ſeized on by Ali Mahomet.—About this time Azim Khan Dungheah, a Rohilla who had been employed in the ſervice of the zemindar of Pelcabeat,† joined Ali Mahomet; whom it is ſaid he urged to invade the poſſeſſions of his late maſter. The Rohilla, who embraced with eagerneſs every opportunity of extending his conqueſts, and acquiring plunder, attacked the Hindoo, and drove him from his reſidence. After the death of Hunund, it is mentioned, though without any accurate detail of facts, and a total omiſſion of date, that Meer Munnoo, the ſon of the Vizier Kummer ud Dein, was ſent into Rohilcund with an army to compel Ali Mahomet to account for the Rohilcund revenue, and to reſtore the artillery which had been attached to the troops of Hunund. Ali Mahomet met Meer Munnoo at a paſſage of the Ganges near Daranaghur,‡ where an adjuſtment was effected; and the daughter of the Rohilla, it is alſo ſaid, given to Meer Munnoo's brother in marriage. No other dates are

* This event happened A. D. 1749, the year after Nadir Shah's invaſion of India.

† A town in the north eaſt quarter of Rohilcund, near the foot of a woody range of hills.—Vide Rennel's map.

‡ A town on the bank of the Ganges, in the north weſt quarter of Rohilcund.—See Rennel's map.

affixed

affixed to the arrival of Hafiz, Rhamut Khan* in India, than that he joined his countrymen during the adminiſtration of Ali Mahomet; who being deſirous of effacing any reſentment that he might harbour for the murder of Alum Khan, quickly advanced this chief to an important ſtation. Dhoondy Khan, a nephew of Alum Khan, who probably came to Rohilcund about the ſame period, was alſo much favored by Ali Mahomet. Actuated more perhaps by the deſire of conqueſt, than retaliating former diſgrace, Ali Mahomet invaded Cummaioun, which he over-run, and compelled the chief to take refuge in the Serinagur country.† He amaſſed a large booty in this expedition, which was concluded by the exaction of an annual tribute; and Rohilla troops were ſtationed in the forts of Caſhipour and Rooderpour, dependencies of Cummaioun, which he kept poſſeſſion of, to record, it is ſaid, the revenge that had been taken for the murder of his father.

Ali Mahomet, who reſided chiefly at Owlah, eſtabliſhed throughout his territory a permanent ſyſtem of government, which though occaſionally rigorous, afforded a general protection to the lower claſs of people. Surdar Khan, who had approved himſelf in many actions a brave ſoldier, was appointed to the

* Hafiz Rhamut, ſome documents ſay, firſt came into India in the character of a merchant.

† An Hindoo territory, bounding Rohilcund on the north.

command of the army; and certain lands were granted him for his maintenance. Futtah Khan,* with a comformable donation, was created the public treaſurer, and keeper of the houſehold ſtores. Peleabeat and Bareily were given to Hafiz Rhamut; and Moradabad, to Dhoondy Khan. Ali Mahomet ſeems to have held the imperial authority at this period in a low degree of eſtimation, for he openly ſeized on ſome valuable commodities, which the Governor of Bengal had diſpatched, by the road of Rohilcund, to court, for the uſe of the King. Setting alſo at defiance the power of Sufdah Jung, the Subahdar of Oude, he plundered a large quantity of valuable timber that had been cut down for his uſe in the northern parts of Rohilcund. Sufdar Jung, who had ever been inimical to the late Conquerors of Kuthair, acquired a ſufficient influence over Mahomet Shah,† to induce that Prince to attack Ali Mahomet. The Rohillas were ſecretly ſupported by the Vizier Kummer ud Dein, who, bore an inveterate hatred to the Subahdar of Oude; and who, in the uſage of the courtiers of that day, ſtrengthened his party by every powerful connection that he could procure.

* Futtah Khan, originally a Hindoo, was adopted by Ali Mahomet. The uſage of male adoption prevails even in Mahometan families where there are many ſons.

† Sufdar Jung chiefly perſuaded Mahomet Shah to undertake this expedition, by a ſtipulation of paying one lack of rupees for every marching, and half a lack for every halting day, of the Imperial army, until its arrival in Rohilcund.

THE

The King entered Rohilcund with a great force, and without coming to an engagement, poſſeſſed himſelf of the open country. Ali Mahomet, aware of his inability to reſiſt the King's army, and feeling perhaps a reluctance to face his Sovereign in the field, had retired into the woods of Banghur,† the ſkirts of which were defended by a chain of forts that had been erected by the Rohillas at a former period. Ali Mahomet maintained this poſt for ſome time, but having no hope of relief, and being ſcantily ſupplied with proviſions, he ſurrendered himſelf into the hands of the King; and at the interceſſion of Kummer ud Dein, was pardoned.

The power of the Rohillas was now annihilated in Rohilcund, and all their officers and principal people were removed to Dehli. This remarkable event, which happened in the year 1745, ſhews that Ali Mahomet muſt have been eſſentially aided by the diſtracted ſtate of the empire, during the Perſian invaſion, in the increaſe and eſtabliſhment of his dominion. It appears that he remained about a year at Dehli, under the immediate protection of the Vizier, when at that nobleman's recommendation, he was appointed the military governor of Sirhend, and ordered to reduce the

* During the campaign of Mahomet Shah in Rohilcund, he gave to the Shote river the name of Yaa Wuffadar, or faithful friend, from the great conveniences derived by his army from this ſtream, whoſe waters are ſalubrious, and flow in a beautifully winding courſe.

† Theſe woods lie between Owlah and Rampore.—Vide Rennel's map

former

former chief of that place, who had thrown off his allegiance to the empire. Previouſly to his proceeding on this ſervice, Ali Mahomet had been required to ſend Abed-ullah and Fyze-ullah, two of his ſons, to Labore,* to be kept as hoſtages for the good conduct of the father. The Rohilla, who on every occaſion diſplayed the ability and ſpirit of a ſoldier, defeated the Sirhend rebel, and reduced to his ſubjection Kote Roy, one of the ſtrongeſt fortreſſes in the upper part of India. During the reſidence of Ali Mahomet at Sirhend, his party, which had been joined by a body of two or three thouſand marauding Afghans, was computed at ten thouſand cavalry, and fifteen or twenty thouſand infantry of various denominations. The Rohilla did not take any part in the Durany war;† but whilſt the Moghul and Afghan armies were approaching to action, he quitted the Punjab and retired to Hurdwar, from whence he penetrated in 1747 into Rohilcund, which he rapidly conquered. The two ſons of Ali Mahomet, who had been delivered as hoſtages for his good conduct, were taken by Ahmed Shah, the Durany, in the fort of Sirhend; where they had been placed by Kummur ud Dein, previouſly to the reduction of that town by the Afghans. Ali Mahomet could not long have enjoyed the fruits of his laſt ſucceſs; for his death, according to the

* Meer Munroo, the ſon of the Vizier, was at that time the Governor of Labore.

† The firſt invaſion of the Durany Ahmed Shah.

memoirs

memoirs of that time, happened in the latter end of 1747,* at Owlah.

PERHAPS no ſoldier that has appeared in India, paſſed through more active and eventful ſcenes of life, than Ali Mahomet. He was born, and grew up it may be ſaid, amidſt the din of arms. He fell when a boy into the hands of Daoud Khan. An inceſſant ſeries of warfare occupied his manhood, and he died at the period of finally ſubduing the territory, which he had before arduouſly fought for, conquered, and had loſt.—This chief bore the reputation of a liberal encourager of agriculture and commerce. He was ſtrict and rigorous in the exactions which he levied from his ſubjects; but as he rarely infringed, he never remitted a ſtipulated engagement. Owlah, his uſual place of reſidence, and the principal town of Rohilcund, he ornamented with numerous public and private edifices, which were conſtructed and arranged with an order and taſte ſeldom ſeen in Indian cities.

SAUD Ullah Khan, the third ſon† of Ali Mahomet, ſucceeded to the ſupremacy of the Rohilla Dominion. In obedience to the laſt counſel of his father, who had recommended Hafiz Rhamut to his young ſucceſſor,‡ as the moſt capable of the Rohillas, Saud Ullah appointed that officer his deputy in the management of pub-

* Or the beginning of 1748.

† The two elder were yet kept in confinement by the Durannies.

‡ At his father's death, Saud Ullah was about twelve years of age.

lic

lic affairs. During the adminiſtration of Saud Ullah, the Patans of Furruckabad, commanded by their chief, Caim Khan Bunghiſh, invaded Rohilcund. Confident of ſucceſs, and preſuming on the military reputation which he had acquired, the Patan precipitately quitted the body of his army, and advanced with a party of his principal officers. A detachment of Rohillas in ambuſcade, fired at Caim Khan as he paſſed, and killed him, with ſome other perſons of his retinue. The army, on the death of their leader, fled, leaving the baggage and guns behind, which were captured by the Rohillas, and eſtimated at a great value. Saud Ullah, ſaid at that time to be fourteen years of age, had accompanied the army on this expedition.* Sufdar Jung ſtill retaining a ſtrong animoſity to the Rohillas, and deſirous of improving the occaſion of Saud Ullah's minority, formed a junction with Mulhar Row, the chief of a large body of Marhatta cavalry, and penetrated into Rohilcund. The Rohillas, unable to reſiſt ſo large a force, took ſhelter in the ſkirts of the northern mountains, where they remained, until ſome revolutions at court cauſed Sufdar Jung to move towards Dehli. He carried with him the ſtrength of his own, and the

* The invaſion of Caim Khan happened in the latter end of 1749. It appears that Mahomet Khan, the ſon of Daoud Khan, who had taken refuge at Furruckabad, accompanied Caim Khan on the expedition, and fell in the action. In the courſe of the ſame year, an officer named Kuttib-ud-Dein, the ſon or grand ſon of Azmut Ullah Khan, was appointed by the court to the Government of Moradabad, and entered Rohilcund with an army which was encountered and defeated by the Rohillas.

aux-

auxiliary army,* ſtationing in Rohilcund, a detachment for the purpoſe of maintaining poſſeſſions of the diſtricts he had conquered: the Rohillas did not long continue in concealment, but collecting their ſcattered forces, they expelled the remaining troops of Sufdar Jung.

It appears that about the year 1750, the two elder ſons of Ali Mahomet, having been enlarged by Admed Shah Dourany, came into Rohilcund, and ſolicited a portion of the paternal eſtate. Their claims were ſubmitted to the deliberation of the principal Rohilla officers, among whom Hafiz took the lead, and it was reſolved that the territory which had been perſonally poſſeſſed by Ali Mahomet, ſhould be divided amongſt his ſons.† Violent diſputes ſoon aroſe amongſt the brothers, in the detail of which, little accuracy is obſerved by the writers of the tracts, that have come into my poſſeſſion: nor would the relation, conſiſting of perplexed ſcenes of treachery and intrigue, tend to forward the general plan of this treatiſe. It will be ſufficient to ſay, that the Rohilla chiefs, aware of the difficulties that affected the late arrangement, and diſſatisfied at the conduct of Abed Ullah Khan, the eldeſt of the bro-

* It is mentioned, that the Marhattas withdrew from Rohilcund, on receiving a bond of fifty lacks of rupees from the Rohillas; and it ſhould ſeem, that they made the non-payment of this bond an oſtenſible cauſe for invading Rohilcund, in the years 1772 and 1773.

† Ali Mahomet had ſix ſons, Abed Ullah Khan, Fyze-Ullah Khan, Saud Ullah, Mahomet Yar Khan, Allah Yar Khan, and Murtaza Khan.

thers, united in force, and expelled him with ſome other branches of the family from Rohilcund. Fyze-Ullah Khan, the ſecond ſon of Ali Mahomet, obtained, after the expulſion of Abed Ullah, the diſtricts of Rampour; which his prudent wary conduct has preſerved to this day, though he has been involved in a ſeries of domeſtic feuds, and was once inveſted and reduced to extreme diſtreſs by a powerful army.* The diſtricts which had been allotted to Abed Ullah, for a ſhort time conſidered the ruling chief, were now beſtowed on Saud Ullah Khan: who again roſe to his former ſuperiority of ſtation. Hafiz Ahmed, having acquired by his office, military ability, and genius, and his extenſive influence in Rohilcund, gradually diminiſhed, and at length wholly ſuperſeded, the authority of Saud Ullah, who aſſenting to the offer of a penſion,† Hafiz was avowedly advanced to the ſupreme adminiſtration of affairs. The cauſe of this revolution is aſcribed to the indolent and diſſipated genius of Saud Ullah, who, it was repreſented by the party of Hafiz, would ſoon waſte the reſources of the country, and entail a diſgrace on the nation. Without ſearching into remoter motives, it may be directly imputed to the ambition of Hafiz, who no longer held in remembrance the hand that had raiſed him to honours, and had committed a ſon to his protection; but rent without a ſcruple every bond that confined his ſchemes of

* The combined army of Engliſh and Shujah-ud-Doulah, in 1774.

† It is ſaid that the other chiefs contributed to this payment, which amounted to eight lacks of rupees per annum.

grandeur.

grandeur. Hafiz Rhamut had borne a part in the actions of his countrymen in India; he had ſeen that no limits are affixed to power, and that no duties, preſcribed for the guidance of men, impede the ſtrides of ambition. The death of Saud Ullah Khan, which happened in 1761, at Owlah, contributed to fix the power of Hafiz Rhamut, and relieved him from his proportioned payment of the ſum, that had been aſſigned for the maintenance of that chief.

The want of eſtabliſhed facts for deſcribing in regular order the Hiſtory of the Rohillas, confined me to the uſe of ſuch materials, as immediately mark their military progreſs, or lead to the eſſential changes of their government. In my Rohilla papers it is mentioned, that on Sufdar Jung's death,* Ghaze-ud-Dein, the Vizier of the Empire,† joined by Ahmed Khan Bunguſh,‡ marched an army into Oude, and commenced hoſtilities againſt Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who had refuſed to make any pecuniary acknowledgments to the court on the event of his acceſſion, or render an account of the perſonal eſtate of his father.§ Shujah-ud-Dowlah, aware of his inability to reſiſt this attack alone, ſolicited the aid of the Rohilla ſtates, who aſſenting to the requeſt, came into Oude

* He died in the year 1754.

† Ahmed Shah then ſat on the throne of Delhi.

‡ The Navaab of Furruckabad.

§ In Mahometan ſtates, the prince on the death of a ſubject, becomes the heir of his property; which is often remitted to the family on the payment of a moderate fine.

with a large force. The Rohilla chiefs ultimately effected a ceſſation of hoſtility between the contending parties; and being choſen to decide on the claims preferred by Ghaze-ud-Dein, it was ſtipulated, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah ſhould appropriate certain diſtricts of the annual value of five lacks of rupees, to the uſe of the Imperial family. Nor was this engagement acceded to by Ghaze-ud-Dein, until Saud Ullah Khan had agreed to become ſecurity for its performance.*—Saud Ullah Khan, in 1760, had accompanied the Rohilla army to the relief of Najeb Khan, one of the Rohilla chiefs, who was inveſted by a body of Mahrattas at Sookertal; † and this appears to be the laſt public act which Saud Ullah performed.

THAT you may view more comprehenſively the ſituation of the Rohillas at the period of Saud Ullah's death, it is neceſſary to lay before you a brief deſcription of thoſe officers, who at that time held poſſeſſions in Rohilcund.

Dhoondy Khan, in the partition of lands which were aſſigned to the chiefs, obtained the diſtricts of the Biſſouly, Morabadad, Chaundpore, and Sumbul.‡ He died previouſly to the Rohilla war, 1774, leaving three ſons, the eldeſt of whom, Mohubbullah

* It was on this occaſion, I believe, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah and Saud Ullah made an exchange of their turbans. This ceremony is obſerved by the Mahometans in India as a pledge of friendſhip, and ſometimes it is practiſed in the ratification of treaties.

† The name of a village, and ford of the Ganges.—See Rennell's Map.

‡ Towns in Rohilcund.—See Rennell's Map.

Khan,

Khan, ſucceeded to the largeſt portion of his territory.* Mullah Surdar Khan, to whom the diſtricts of Sunejah Kote,† and ſome other adjacent lands had been aſſigned, left ſix ſons; amongſt whom diſſentions ariſing about the diviſion of the inheritance, the two eldeſt, Ahmed Khan and Mahomet Khan, had recourſe to arms, for the deciſion of the conteſt. Ahmed Khan, ſupported by Hafiz Rhamut, defeated his brother in an action, and took him priſoner.‡ Futtah Khan, one of the early aſſociates of Ali Mahomet, who had accumulated much wealth from the office§ he had ſo long filled, held the diſtricts of Bandaum, Auſſete, and Heſſinpour.‖ This officer, who died before the expulſion of the Rohillas, was ſucceeded in the territorial property, by his eldeſt ſon Ahmed Khan.¶ The widow of Saud Ullah Khan, held in high eſtimation for a liberality of diſpoſition and pious deportment, reſided in the town of Owlah, which had been by the conſent of the chiefs, committed to her immediate charge. After the

* This chief, confiding in an engagement made with the Vizier, in which it was ſtipulated that he ſhould not be moleſted by the combined army, did not appear in arms during the Rohilla War, 1743. But the Vizier violating the agreement, ſtripped him of his territory and treaſure.

† Situate at the diſtance of forty-four computed miles to the weſtward of Bareily. Vide Rennell's Map.

‡ Ahmed Khan commanded part of the Rohilla army in the war, 1774.

§ Futtah Khhn held the office of treaſurer, a maſter of the houſhold.

‖ Towns lying in the weſt and ſouth quarters of Rohilcund.

¶ Ahmed Khan, the ſon of Futtah Khan, after the defeat of the Rohillas in 1774, joined the army of Fyze Ullah, at Laidong, and retired with that chief to Rampour.

death

death of Saud Ullah, when the common authority of the government had devolved on Hafiz Rhamut, it is not ſeen that the Rohilla arms were extenſively employed, or that any important revolution affected their ſtate. They had previouſly to the Vizier's invaſion of Rohilcund, carried on a deſultory war with the Mahrattas, and ſeized on certain of their diſtricts in the Duab, which continued a ſhort time in the Rohilla poſſeſſion. The Mahrattas who afterwards came in great force, expelled the Rohillas from the Duab, and laid waſte the eaſtern quarter of Rohilcund. As a ſhort hiſtory of the life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah will be annexed in which the principal events of the Rohilla war are noticed, a diſcuſſion of them in this place becomes unneceſſary.

The form of government adopted by the Rohillas in India, of near affinity to that which exiſts in their native country, may be denominated feudal. The ſucceſſors of Daoud Khan poſſeſſing ſlender hereditary pretenſions, and ſurrounded by the men who had eſſentially aided in the firſt conqueſt, held but a limited ſway. Sundar Khan and Futtah Khan, two of the moſt reſpectable of the Rohillas, never ceaſed to oppoſe the progreſs of Hafiz Rhamut, which was conſpicuouſly directed to ſovereign rule; and by a zealous attachment to the party of Saud Ullah's widow, who was beloved by the people, they formed a moderate counterpoiſe to the encroaching power of that chief. Here it becomes my duty, whether as the compiler of Rohilla tracts, or a recorder of common fame, to briefly delineate the character

character of Hafiz Rhamut. Born and reared to manhood in a country,* where its people are taught to conſider a military as the only laudable profeſſion, and that the ſword conveys an irreproachable title to every acquiſition, Hafiz Rhamut, conſtitutionally brave, became an enterpriſing ſoldier. His government was founded on the common baſis of an active ſyſtem; but flouriſhed from the knowledge he poſſeſſed of its reſources. He ſeems to have maintained a general good faith in public tranſactions, and though in the attainment of power he trampled on another's right, his genius and valor preſerved the allegiance, and perhaps the love of his people; who ſaw in him a maſter, whoſe hand was equally prompt to indulgence or protection. And here I am impelled to ſay, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah alone, would never have dared Hafiz to the field. Hafiz Rhamut, like moſt of the chiefs or princes of a country, where ſucceſſion falls to the ſtrongeſt arm, was unfortunate in his family: Enayat Khan his eldeſt ſon, took up arms againſt him, was defeated, and obliged to ſeek ſhelter with Shujah-ud-Dowlah, in whoſe army he ſerved at the Battle of Buxar.† Diſſentions had ariſen alſo amongſt the deſcendants of the other Rohilla officers, which involved the country in general commotion, and on the arrival of the united forces of the Engliſh and Shujah-ud-Dowlah in Rohilcund, the

* Afghaniſtan.

† He afterwards returned to Rohilcund, where he died before the laſt Rohilla war.

chiefs

chiefs appeared to dread the encreaſe of each others power, more than the invaſion of an enemy.

I WILL conclude this treatiſe, by obſerving, that the Afghan conquerors of Rohilcund, were a rapacious, bold, and lawleſs race of men; and it ſhould ſeem, that after they had eſtabliſhed a government in India, they adopted the more effeminate vices of the ſouth, and became intriguing, deceitful, and treacherous. The Rohillas, eſpecially the lower claſſes, were, with but few exceptions, the only ſect of Mahometans in India who exerciſed the profeſſion of huſbandry; and their improvements of the various branches of agriculture, were amply recompenſed by the abundance, and ſuperior quality of the productions of Rohilcund.*

THE actions of Najeb Khan, thoſe eſpecially which occupied the latter periods of his life, bearing a cloſe relation to the hiſtory of Rohilcund, I have given them a ſeparate place in the treatiſe; which as it repreſents him in a more conſpicuous light, will afford me the ſenſible pleaſure of offering up a tribute of reſpect and applauſe, to the memory of a brave liberal ſoldier, and a ſtateſman of diſtinguiſhed ability.

NAJEB Khan, the nephew of the Biſharut Khan, mentioned in the Rohilla ſketches, came into Rohilcund during the adminiſtration of Ali Mahomet. He was at firſt, appointed to the charge of a

* This country is ſaid to have yielded to the Rohillas, one million ſterling, which is now reduced by the injudicious management of the Nair, to thirty, or at moſt, forty thouſand pounds.

very

very ſmall party, not conſiſting, it is ſaid, of more than twelve horſe and foot. But his courage and activity ſoon brought him into the notice of Ali Mahomet, who entruſted him with a reſpectable military command, and procured for him in marriage the daughter of Dhoondy Khan. Whilſt Ali Mahomet governed the Sirhend diſtricts, Najeb Khan, who had followed his fortunes, rendered him an important ſervice, in reducing to obedience a refractory Hindoo chief of that quarter. After the return of the Rohillas into Rohilcund, Dhoondy Khan beſtowed the diſtricts of Duranaghur and Chaundpour, which had been granted to him in the original diviſion of Rohilcund, on Najeb Khan, who did not long confine himſelf within this narrow limit; but croſſing the Ganges, he made depredations on the territory of the Goojers,* as far as Ghous Ghur and Sarunpour.†

On the death of Mahomet Shah,‡ Sufdar Jung avowedly announced his hoſtile diſpoſition to the court, which was then wholly directed by the Vizier Ghaze-ud-Dein, and prepared to lead an army to Dehli. Sufdar Jung prevailed on the Rohilla chiefs, ever ready to draw the ſword in the purſuit of plunder or conqueſt, to join his army, which had advanced to the neighbourhood

* A ſect of Hindoos, in upper India, of the fourth tribe, who equally exerciſe the profeſſion of agriculture, and arms.

† Vide Rennell's map.

‡ Mahomet Shah died in A. D. 1747, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Ahmed Shah.

of Dehli: when an Hindoo* officer of the court, attached to the intereſts of Ghaze-ud-Dein, induced Najeb Khan, by high offers of advancement, to ſecede from the combination, and eſpouſe the imperial cauſe.—Alarmed at this defection, the reſidue of the Rohilla troops, commanded by Hafiz Rhamut, retired into their own country. Najeb Khan was honourably received by Ghaze-ud-Dein, and being ſoon after promoted to the command of the army, he attacked Sufdar Jung, and compelled him to croſs the Ganges. On the ſucceſsful concluſion of this campaign, in which the Rohilla was wounded, he received from the King the title of Najeb-ud-Dowlah.

Subsequently to this event, he moved with a ſtrong body of troops into Rohilcund, where he eſtabliſhed, in the diſtricts which formerly pertained to him, a fixed government; and though he diſclaimed a dependance on Hafiz Rhamut, he was conſidered a political member of the Rohilla ſtate. From a powerful ſupport at court, and the diſtinguiſhed popularity of his character, Najeb-ud-Dowlah was feared and envied by Hafiz, who ſaw in the growing influence of this chief, a mortifying diminution of his own. A mutual enmity ſoon produced hoſtilities, which ultimately involved the whole body of the Rohillas in a civil war.

On the commencement of the diſſentions, Saud Ullah Khan, the nominal head of the Rohilla ſtates, had embraced the party

* Named Devi Sing.

of

of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, which he was compelled to abandon by the ſuperior power of Hafiz Rhamut, and his partiſans, who poſſeſſing the reſources of the country, could indulge or diſtreſs him at pleaſure. Najeb-ud-Dowlah, perceiving his inability to combat ſo formidable an oppoſition, retired from Rohilcund, and again attached himſelf to the ſervice of the court. After his arrival in Dehli, he was either directed by the miniſtry, or he ſolicited permiſſion, to reduce the Mahometan governor of Sarunpour,* who maintained a forcible poſſeſſion of that quarter, and had refuſed to render any account of the imperial portion of the revenue. The enemy retiring on the approach of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, the diſtricts of Sarunpour and Ghous Ghur became an eaſy acquiſition. The activity and enterprize of this officer, who now commanded an approved body of ſoldiers, prompted him again to croſs the Ganges, and ſeize on his former poſſeſſions, to which he annexed the lands of Tillalabad. In the northern diviſion of this new conqueſt he founded the town Najebabad,† which in a ſhort time was filled with commodious and beautiful ſtructures, and became the centre of an extenſive commerce. At the diſtance of a mile from the town, he erected the fort of Najeb Ghur,‡ where the adjacent inhabitants, in the event of war, might depoſit their

* This town ſtands on the northern part of the Duab, and is at this time held by Gholam Kauder Khan, the grandſon of Najeb-ud-Dowlah.

† Situate in the northern diviſions of Rohilcund. —Vide Rennell.

‡ This fort is alſo called Patter Ghur.

property, and find alſo a ſecurity for their perſons. A want of more preciſe dates, which I have in vain ſearched for, has thrown a confuſion and perplexity on the preceding actions of Najeb-ud-Dowlah: but it is now ſeen that in the year 1757,* this officer was promoted to the ſtation of Meer Buckſy, with the title of Amir-ul-Omrah, at the inſtance of Ghaze-ud-Dein; who, in 1753, having depoſed and deprived of ſight Ahmed Shah, raiſed to the throne Alumguir Sani, the father of the preſent Emperor.

When the Durannies entered† Hindoſtan, in their fourth expedition to participate in the wreck of the Empire, Najeb-ud-Dowlah, who was himſelf an Afghan,‡ and aware of the ſuperior power of Ahmed Shah, attached himſelf without reſerve to the fortunes of that prince; diſſolving the connection he had formed with Ghaze-ud-Dein, without heſitation, or an honorable regard for the favours he had received from the hand of that miniſter. The return of Ahmed Shah§ into his own country, enabled the Mahrattas to exerciſe an almoſt undivided authority in the upper provinces of

* Dow's Hiſtory of Hindoſtan. In the Khazanahee Omah, a Perſian book which treats curſorily of the actions of the late Emperors of Hindoſtan, it is ſaid, that Najeb-ud-Dowlah was appointed to this office by Ahmed Shah Duranny. I have followed Dow's Hiſtory, from the probability that Najeb-ud-Dowlah would receive his commiſſion from the Court, under whoſe authority he acted.

† In A. D. 1756.

‡ The inhabitants of the ſpace of territory, lying between the river Attoc and Perſia, are called Afghans.

§ Ahmed Shah returned into Afghaniſtan, from his fourth Indian expedition, in the year 1757.

India. Najeb-ud Dowlah, the only Mahometan chief of power or ability, that was hoſtile to their intereſt, could not bring into the field an army of ſufficient ſtrength to oppoſe their progreſs. He had been compelled to take poſt in the vicinity of Sookertal, a fort ſituate on the weſt ſide of the Ganges,* where he was reduced to ſuch extremity, that had not the approach of the Rohillas, and Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who were moving to his aſſiſtance, together with the rumour of the Duranny Ahmed Shah's march towards the Jumna, obliged the Mahrattas to retire, it is probable that Najeb-ud-Dowlah would have fallen under the ſuperior force of their arms.

In the ſame year, but previouſly to this event, Ghaze-ud-Dein had cut off the Emperor,† and placed Shah Jehan the Second on the throne. The capital no longer contained any grand object of ambition. The power of its princes had been ſunk and trampled on, its treaſures had been plundered, and its gates indiſcriminately thrown open to Hindoos and Mahometans, according to the varying power of the day. The Mahrattas, who in their turn gave the law at Dehli, depoſed the Shah Jehan, who had been exhibited to promote the views of Ghaze-ud Dein, and raiſed to the throne, Jehan Bucht, the ſon of Ali Gohur.‡ After ſome deſultory actions, the Duranny Ahmed Shah, joined by

* Now in ruins —See Rennell's Map.
† Alumguir Sani
‡ One of the domeſtic titles of the preſent Emperor.

Najeb-

Najeb-ud-Dowlah and their Rohilla chiefs, attacked the Mahrattas, and defeated them, in a general engagement on the plains of Bandelly,* in 1770; when Najeb-ud-Dowlah ſingularly diſtinguiſhed himſelf, routing, it is ſaid, with his own troops, the diviſion of the Mahratta army commanded by Duttah Pattelle,† who fell in the field. In the battle of Paniſrett,‡ the fortune of which was to decide the exiſtence of the Mahometan Empire in India, the Afghans were powerfully aſſiſted by Najeb-ud-Dowlah, who during the period of an important intercourſe with them, evinced an invaried fidelity and ſpirit.

THE overthrow of the Mahrattas and Ahmed Shah's return into his own country, contributed to give the affairs of the Empire a leſs diſtreſsful aſpect; and and the abilities of Najeb-ud-Dowlah,§ who conducted the adminiſtration of the young Prince,‖ again reflected on the capital a glimmering ray of reſpect. A war now broke out between Najeb-ud-Dowlah and the Jatts, a powerful and war-like tribe of Hindoos, who in the general convulſion of the ſtate, had ſeized on large tracts of territory, confining on the

* In the neighbourhood of Dehli, at the paſſage of the Jumna, called Bouraree Ghaut.

† One of the Mahratta generals, and the uncle of Mhadree Scindia, now ſo well known in the annals of India.

‡ This deciſive action was fought in February 1761.

§ Ghaze-ud-Dein, in 1761, left Dehli, where he could no longer preſerve an influence, and where he was deteſted for his cruelties and treachery.

‖ Tewen Rucht.

weſtern

weſtern bank of the Jumna, and comprehending the ſtrong holds of Deigh, Combere, Burtpoure, and the city of Agrah. The cauſe of theſe hoſtilities is not explained in any document that has reached my knowledge; nor would perhaps throw any ſtrong light on the hiſtory of Najeb-ud-Dowlah. They aroſe probably from the ſource* which produced the various conteſts and

* The ſeeds which produced the decay of the Moghul empire, and which at this day have ripened into ſuch malignancy, took a deep root during the reign of Aurungzebe; who though one of the moſt ſagacious princes of the houſe of Timur, endangered the welfare of the ſtate, and the ſecurity of his ſubjects, by an injudicious impulſe of domeſtic affection. He portioned amongſt his ſons, who were active and ambitious, the moſt valuable provinces of the empire; where acquiring an influence and ſtrength, that cannot be held by an Aſiatic ſubject with ſafety to the monarch, they expected with impatience the event that was to determine their ſchemes and pretenſions. On the death of Aurungzebe, the ſons eagerly took up arms, and after deluging the country with blood, the war was ſucceſsfully terminated by Bahauder Shah, who may be ſaid to have mounted the throne of Dehli, from a mound of fraternal and kindred ſlaughter.—Not being endowed with experience, nor perhaps the genius of his father, the officers who governed the provinces, relaxed during his ſhort reign in their allegiance, ſhewing obedience to ſuch orders, as might tend to promote their own views. The Mahrattas, whom Aurungzebe had nearly ſubdued by the active efforts of a thirty years war, deſcended, at his death, from their mountains, and rapidly recovered the territories from which they had been expelled. Previouſly to the Perſian invaſion, the ſubahdars of Oude and the Decan, having virtually erected their chiefſhips into independant ſtates, commanded, without the controul of the court, large armies, and diſpoſed of the amount of the revenues, without rendering any account to the imperial treaſury. The Empire, thus enfeebled, and governed by a luxurious and indolent prince, invited Nadir Shah to conqueſt and plunder. The river Attoc, the natural weſtern barrier of India, on whoſe bank Mahomet Shah ſhould have ſtood in perſon, was croſſed by the Perſians without oppoſition; and this inglorious prince, unworthy of the diadem he wore of the illuſtrious houſe which had given to the world a Baber, an Akbar, and an Aurungzebe, ſurrendered

and diſorders of the times; when the ſtrong arm, unreſtrained by fear of puniſhment, bore down the weaker; when eſtabliſhed rights were ſubverted, and the private bonds of faith, with impunity, rent aſunder.

Sooridge Mull, the chief of the Jatts, commenced the campaign by attacking a Mahometan Jaguirdar,* the adherent of Najeb-ud-Dowlah. But the event of this war, which was fatal to Sooridge Mull,† did not confer any eſſential advantage on Najeb-ud-Dowlah, though he gained an eaſy and complete victory over the enemy: for the diſtricts of Sarunpour had been over-run by the Sicques, againſt whom he was obliged to march, and to forego the fruits of his ſucceſs.

In the autumn of the year 1764, Najeb-ud-Dowlah was beſieged in Dehli, by a numerous army of Mahometans, Jatts, and Sicques, collected by Jewayir Sing, the ſon of Sooridge Mull, who had formed ſanguine hopes of cruſhing the power of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, and revenging the death of his father. Ghaze-ud-Dein, who had brought with him a body of Patans from Furruckabad, alſo joined

ſurrendered to them, without drawing his ſword, the wealth and dominions of Hindoſtan.—A ſubſequent train of diverſified ruin, moving with a rapidity not paralelled in the hiſtory of nations, has now left no other veſtige of the Moghul empire, than the name of king.

* Mooſah Khan, the Jaguirdar of Furrucknagur, a diſtrict lying between Dehli and Agrah.

† Sooridge Mull was killed in December 1763, in an action fought on the plains of Ghaziabad, near the river Hindia, and about eighteen miles diſtant from Dehli.

the

the confederate forces. After experiencing the diſtreſſes of a cloſe ſiege of four months, heightened by a ſcarcity of proviſions and money, Najeb-ud-Dowlah prevailed on Mullar Row, the Mahratta officer, to detach his troops from the army of Jewayir Sing, who on the deſertion of ſo powerful an ally, raiſed the ſiege. The relief of Dehli was haſtened alſo by the arrival of Ahmed Shah Duranny, at Sirhend, who was approaching with the avowed purpoſe of affording ſuccour to Najeb-ud-Dowlah. This chief had but a ſhort time breathed from the embarraſſments of the late combination, when he ſaw that his moſt active exertions would be called forth to defend the territory he held on the weſtern ſide of the Ganges, from the ravages of the Sicques;—a people conſtitutionally adapted for carrying on the various ſpecies of deſultory war.

Najeb-ud-Dowlah formed a junction in the year 1770, with the Mahratta army, which came into Hindoſtan under the command of Tuckejei Holcar and Mhadgee Scindia, whom, according to my Rohilla papers, he had invited to effect the expulſion of the Sicques from the Duab. Najeb-ud-Dowlah, who had in the latter period of his life fallen into an infirm ſtate of health, was ſeized with a ſevere illneſs in the Mahratta camp. Leaving behind him a part of his army under the command of Zabilah Khan, his eldeſt ſon, he proceeded towards Rohilcund; but the diſorder became ſo violent, that he could not proceed farther than Happer, a ſmall town in the Duab, where he

 died.*

died.* The body was carried to Najebad, and interred in a tomb that had been erected by his order, in the vicinity of that town. Najeb-ud-Dowlah held in his own right, and in fief of the Empire, a tract of country extending from Panifret eaſtwards to Najebad; in the Duab, it was confined on the north, by Sarunpour, and on the ſouth, by the ſuburbs of Dehli; and in Rohilcund, it reached from the mountains of Siringnaghur, to the diſtrict of Moradabad.†

The revenue of this territory in its improved ſtate, was calculated at 100 lacks of rupees; but it was reduced to ſeventy, it is ſaid, by the depredations of the Sicques, within a term of three years; nor would this amount have been preſerved, had he not diſplayed in his operation with thoſe Marauders, a diſtinguiſhed ſkill in the alternate exerciſe of arms, and political addreſs. The death of Najeb Khan was lamented by the people whom he governed, and his memory at this day is reſpected and beloved throughout the upper parts of India. He ſupported the character of a gallant ſoldier; he encouraged agriculture, and protected commerce; and he was conſidered as the only remaining chief of the Empire, capable of oppoſing any barrier to the inroads of the Mahratta and Sicque nations.

* His death happened in October, 1770.

† A principal town in Rohilcund, ſtanding on the banks of the Ramgunge.—See Rennell's map.

SUCCINCT

SUCCINCT MEMOIRS

OF

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH.

A VARIETY of materials, ſupplied by the liberality and inveſtigation of my friends, has enabled me to write an abbreviated hiſtory of the family and life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah; a prince who ſupported a conſpicuous character on the theatre of Hindoſtan, and who, from his tranſactions with the Engliſh nation in India, has founded an important epocha in their annals. Having ſelected with caution, and unreſervedly commented on the documents that have come before me, I firmly truſt, that no marks of paſſion, no deſign to overcharge, or ſuppreſs facts, will appear in the relation. I am deſirous alſo of exhibiting a general outline of the actions of a prince, who ſtood much above

mediocrity in the eſtimation of his ſubjects; that by a knowledge of his character, and of their ſentiments, ſome ſatisfactory opinions may be formed, of the diſpoſition and moral qualities of the natives of Hindoſtan.

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH, the ſon of Sufdar Jung, by a daughter of Saadut Khan, was born at Dehli, in the year 1729 of the Chriſtian æra. Though a long line of illuſtrious anceſtors be not the ſtrongeſt tenure of the dominions held by Indian princes, who are taught to conſider fortune, and the power of arms, as the primary aids in acquiring and maintaining empire; yet a diſtinguiſhed deſcent imparts a luſtre and weight to the other qualities of a fortunate leader, and he himſelf beholds it with oſtentatious pleaſure. Hiſtorical truth calls on me to do juſtice to the claims of the family of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who, in Mr. Dow's Hiſtory of Hindoſtan, is denominated "The infamous ſon, of a more infamous Perſian pedlar."* The anceſtors of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, have for a long ſpace of time been eſtabliſhed in Niſhabur, a town of Khoroſan, where they held landed poſſeſſions, and were claſſed amongſt the principal inhabitants of the province.

DURING my journey through Perſia, I had an opportunity of

* Mr. Dow uniformly endeavours to throw an odium on the family and character of the late Vizier. When informed of the opprobrious terms uſed by that writer, in diſcuſſing the ſubject of his Domeſtic Hiſtory, Shujah-ud-Dowlah attributed the language to the reſentment of Mr. Dow, for having been refuſed the ſalt-petre farm of the Allahabad diſtricts.

converſing

converſing with ſome of the inhabitants of Niſhabur, who bore indiſputable teſtimony to the ancient rank of the family of Shujah-ud Dowlah. That this fact may be more fully exemplified, though it leads to prolixity, it is neceſſary to mention, that Mirzah Naſſeer, the father of the maternal grand-ſire* of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, came into Hindoſtan in the beginning of the reign of Bahaudar Shah,† by whom he was appointed to an office of truſt at Patna, where his tomb yet remains. Mirza Naſſeer had two ſons, the ſecond of whom, Mahomet Aumeen, on being appriſed of the death of his father, left Perſia, and about the year 1708 viſited the court of Furruckſir. He was appointed by this prince, governor of the fort of Agrah; and ſoon riſing to greater honours he ultimately became the Viceroy of Oude, by the title of Saredut Khan Burhaan-ul-Mulck. By the reduction of this province, which had long been in a ſtate of rebellion, he acquired a conſpicuous military reputation, and was promoted to the office of Darogha Khas,‡ with the titular command of 7000 horſe.

About this time, Mahomet Muckeim, afterwards entitled Sufdar Jung, the nephew of Saadut Khan, came into India, and had the daughter of his uncle given to him in marriage; of which Shujah-ud-Dowlah, was, I believe, the only male iſſue. Sufdar

* Saadut Khan, entitled Burhaan-ul-Mulck.

† This Emperor commenced his reign in 1707, and died in 1712.

‡ Darogha Khas, an officer of nearly the ſame deſcription with the Maſter of the King's Houſehold in England.

Jung,

Jung, who was active, and poſſeſſed uſeful abilities, became the deputy of Saadut Khan in the government of Oude.

In the middle period of Mahomet Shah's* reign, the Mahrattas, at the inſtigation, it is ſuppoſed, of the Nizam Ul Mulck,† who was then at variance with the court, entered the Emperor's dominions, and committed ſevere devaſtations; but in attempting to penetrate into Oude, they were attacked, and after a ſharp conflict, completely routed by the troops of Saadut Khan, who commanded in perſon. This officer afterwards joined the imperial army, which had been collected for the purpoſe of expelling the enemy; but on a pretence of ſome diſguſt, he left the camp and retired into Oude, without having ſeen the Emperor. It has been ſuppoſed that Saadut Khan, in conjunction with Nizam Ul Mulck, invited Nadir Shah into India, with the aſſurance of a powerful interiour aſſiſtance, and an eaſy conqueſt of the Empire. This ſuppoſed fact, has been ſubſcribed to by Mr. Dow in his Hiſtory of Hindoſtan, with poſitive deciſion in favour of its authenticity; and it is partially noticed in the Hiſtory of Nadir Shah, by Mr. Fraſer, who has treated his ſubject with candour, and generally with perſpicuity. This writer aſſerts, that Saadut Khan was engaged in a treacherous negotiation, which the diſaffected nobles of Dehli were ſaid to have maintained with the court of Perſia; but

* This Prince ſucceeded to the throne in 1719, and died in 1747.
† The Father of the preſent Nizam Ul Mulck.

here

here I muſt obſerve, though it diverts the immediate object of my reſearch, that Fraſer's aſſertion ſtands unaccompanied by any detail of events, deſcriptive of the benefit which Saadut Khan derived from the invaſion: nor has he quoted, in ſupport of it, any ſpecific authority. If a probable concluſion, indeed, is to be drawn from Fraſer's relation of the conduct of Saadut Khan, during the Perſian war, I would with little heſitation ſay, that the Governor of Oude held no ſhare in the councils or favour of Nadir Shah. For had he obtained the protection of that Prince, to which he ſtood entitled from the ſervices imputed to him, it is not probable that ſo large a ſhare of the diſaſter of the Dehli army at Karnal, would have fallen on this officer.

In a paſſage of Fraſer's hiſtory, it is ſeen, I think, that Saadut Khan could not have held a confidential correſpondence with the Perſian, or experienced any portion of his indulgence. Fraſer ſays, "Before I relate the treacherous correſpondence* carried on be-"tween Nizam Saadut Khan, and Nadir Shah, the invitation they "gave him to march towards Hindoſtan, which was the princi-"pal motive that encouraged him to undertake the expedition, I "ſhall," &c.—And in the other part of the book it is mentioned, that on Nadir's approach towards the capital, Saadut Khan received orders to join the Dehli army, and that he had already croſſed the Ganges, when he was directed to return to Oude. It had been

* There is no future mention made of the correſpondence.

reſolved

reſolved in the councils of Mahomet Shah, which were diſtracted and wavering, that the army ſhould take the field under the command of the Vizier: and that the Emperor, protected by the forces of Saadut Khan, ſhould remain at Dehli. This Omrah was required to undertake the charge, but an ill ſtate of health at that time detained him in Oude. He arrived in February 1739, in the camp of Mahomet Shah, who receding from his former determination, had joined the army. On the day of Saadut Khan's junction * with the imperial forces, his camp was attacked and plundered by a body of Perſian troops, who ſlew many of his attendants. Saadut Khan, on receiving information of the diſaſter, left the King's apartments, where he had been in waiting, and haſtened to the aſſiſtance of his party. Khan Dowrah, the imperial general, marched to the relief of Saadut Khan, and in a ſhort time, moſt of the imperial officers of Mahomet Shah, who commanded ſeparate bodies, came into action. Nadir Shah, ſeeing the conteſt become obſtinate and ſerious, appeared himſelf at the head of his troops, who then were irreſiſtable, and a complete victory was gained over the Dehli army, which ſuffered a ſevere loſs in men and officers. Khan Dowrah was mortally wounded: his eldeſt ſon, with many Omrahs, were ſlain; and Saadut Khan fell into the hands of the enemy. In the army of Nadir it is ſaid, that 2500 ſoldiers, with ſeven principal officers, were killed, and that 5000

* The army was encamped at Karnal, about 100 miles to the weſtward of Dehli.

men

men were wounded. After the engagement, Nadir Shah ordered a tent to be pitched near his own quarters, for the accommodation of Saadut Khan, and two other Omrahs of Mahomet Shah. The baggage of theſe officers was ſtationed on the outſide of the camp, together with their ſervants, none of whom were permitted to attend them, nor were they allowed to make uſe of their own proviſions. — Little farther mention is made of Saadut Khan by Mr. Fraſer after this affair, than that he was appointed to guard the city of Dehli, on the day of Nadir Shah's firſt entrance. This writer likewiſe ſays, that Nadir Shah, ſummoning Saadut Khan before him on the 9th of March 1739, reprehended him in harſh language for being the cauſe of impeding the collection of the impoſts,* and that on the next day, Saadut Khan died, having been before weak and indiſpoſed. Mr. Fraſer concludes his relation of Saadut Khan, by obſerving, that ſome imagined he died through anger of the abuſive reproach of Nadir; and others are of opinion, that jealouſy provoked him to take poiſon.†

Mr. Fraſer's relation of the conduct of Saadut Khan, the ſpirit of which is ſtrictly adhered to, now awaits a diſpaſſionate deciſion, which is to determine the probable truth of Saadut Khan's invitation of Nadir Shah into India. This author, who has unqueſtionably left us a valuable tract of Indian hiſtory, in other paſſages of

* A tax laid by Nadir Shah on the inhabitants of Dehli.

† It was believed at Dehli, that Saadut died of the effects of an ulcer in his leg.

his book, obſerves, that the Perſian Prince ſhewed marks of indulgence and liberality to many of Mahomet Shah's Omrahs, but no example is brought forward of his munificence, or even lenity, having been extended to Saadut Khan. On the contrary, it is ſeen, that Saadut Khan ſuffered ſeverely in the action of Karnal, and was ſubſequently treated with much rigour.

Sufdar Jung, who reſided at Oude at the period of Saadut Khan's death, ſucceeded to the Government; an appointment, according to the tradition of the family, conferred on him by Nadir Shah: yet I am induced to believe, from the liberal conduct of the Perſian to Mahomet Shah, that Sufdar Jung received the promotion at the hands of his own ſovereign. Sufdar Jung, after the march of the Perſian army from Dehli, came to court, where he obtained the office of Meer Atuſh, or grand maſter of the ordnance.

In the year 1746, Ahmed Shah, the Duranny, invaded Hindoſtan, and had advanced to Sirhend, where he was ſucceſsfully oppoſed by the Dehli army, in which Sufdar Jung had a conſiderable charge. Soon after the acceſſion of Ahmed Shah * to the throne, Sufdar Jung was advanced to the Vizarut, and his ſon, Shujah-ud-Dowlah, to the command of the ordnance. But a ſtrong party at court, compoſed of Ghaze-ud-Dein, † Najeb-ud-

* This prince commenced his reign in 1747.

† The grandſon of the great Nizam-ul-Mulck.

Dowlah,

Dowlah, the Rohilla chief, and Tameid Khan, a court eunuch, prevailing againſt the intereſt of Sufdar Jung, he was compelled to leave Dehli; but not before he had cut off Janied Khan, whom he cauſed to be aſſaſſinated in his own houſe, at an entertainment given to the eunuch.

SUFDAR Jung, having collected a large force, invaded the Imperial territories, and laid ſiege * to the capital, which was cloſely inveſted for the ſpace of ſix months. He is accuſed of committing many enormities and wanton acts of violence during the ſiege, particularly of cannonading the palace, the deſtruction of which could not have facilitated the capture of the fort. The court of Dehli was compelled to accede to the terms of the rebel, who required a formal grant of the provinces of Oude and Allahabad, for himſelf and his heirs.—Sufdar Jung died in the year 1754, during the reign of Alumguir Sani, and was ſucceeded in the ſubahdarry of Oude, by his ſon Shujah-ud-Dowlah,† then about twenty-five years of age. As the deſign of this work does not admit of any enlargement on the ſubject of Sufdar Jung, it will ſuffice to ſay, that his diſpoſition was ſevere, often cruel; and that his rapacious avarice threw uncommon odium on his name.

To illuſtrate the commencement of Shujah-ud-Dowlah's public

* This event happened in 1753.

† This domeſtic name of this prince was Tillah-ud-Dein Hyder. His father, who was in the Oude province during the birth of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, built, in the neighbourhood of Lucknow, the fort of Tillahabad, in commemoration of the event.

life, it is neceſſary to deſcribe the ſituation of the court of Dehli at that period. Ghaze-ud-Dein, who had in 1753 depoſed and deprived of ſight Ahmed Shah, raiſed to the throne Alumguir Sani, whoſe eldeſt ſon Aly-Ghohir, fearing the treacherous diſpoſition and ill deſigns of the miniſter, fled from Dehli.* This prince, accompanied by a ſmall body of Mahrattas, levied for a few months, a ſcanty contribution in the diſtricts lying to the ſouthward of the capital. But being ſoon involved in embarraſſments from ſo ſlender a proviſion, he ſolicited the aid of the Rohilla, Najeb Khan, who refuſing to engage in his cauſe, he retired into the territory of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. The prince was treated for a certain time with hoſpitality and reſpect at Oude, but could not obtain any military aid: and being at length civilly diſmiſſed, he proceeded to Allahabad, which was then held by Mahomet Khuli-Khan, a native of Perſia, and a couſin-german of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. Mahomet Khuli, readily entering into the ſchemes of the prince, which were directed at the reduction of the provinces of Bahar and Bengal, the joint forces croſſed the Caramnaſſa, and were, after various ſucceſſes, defeated in 1761, by the Engliſh troops, at Suan. The honourable and humane treatment which Aly-Ghohir experienced during his reſidence in the Engliſh camp, created a jealouſy in Caſſum Ali Khan, who from the recent teſtimony of the prince's hoſtility to his intereſts, and ſeeing alſo the Engliſh

* This event happened in 1758.

officer

officer much attached to his perſon, expreſſed a virulent diſlike of the connection. The prince accuſed Caſſum of fomenting thoſe diſſentions in his army, which ultimately produced a deſperate mutiny; when he probably would have ſuffered much indignity, had he not been protected by the Engliſh army. This event induced Ally-Ghohir to retire into the dominions of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who received the fugitive king * in a manner expreſſive of zealous attachment, and avowed himſelf the champion of the royal cauſe.

To illuſtrate an event in the hiſtory of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, we muſt advert to the annals of a former period, and notice its origin. Sufdar Jung had appointed to the command of Allahabad, his nephew Mahomet Khuli Khan, who on the acceſſion of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, ſeems to have wholly withdrawn himſelf from the authority of the court of Oude. Aware of the popularity and military abilities of this officer, Shujah-ud-Dowlah did not proſecute any directly hoſtile meaſures againſt Allahabad. During his expedition into Bahar, Mahomet Khuli had placed the government of his poſſeſſions in the hands of Nudjef Khan; the chief, who at a future period became ſo conſpicuous in the upper parts of India. Shujah-ud-Dowlah, embracing the favourable occaſion of Mahomet Khuli's abſence, advanced with a ſmall army towards the limits of Allaha-

* At this period, Ali-Ghohir had nominally ſucceeded to the Empire, by the title of Shah Alum. His father died in 1760.

bad.

bad. He maintained an amicable intercourſe with Nudjef Khan, whom he amuſed by ſolemn proteſtations of attachment to the welfare of Mahomet Khuli; and repreſented, that the Duranny invaſion had induced him to come into that quarter to ſolicit an aſylum for his family in the fort of Allahabad, as his own country poſſeſſed no place of equal ſafety. Nudjef Khan would not liſten to the requeſt, but waited the inſtructions of Mahomet Khuli, who directed, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah's family ſhould be admitted into the fortreſs with a certain number of domeſtic guards. It is ſaid, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah introduced into the female equipages a body of armed men, who ruſhed on the garriſon, and took the fort without any effuſion of blood. This capture, which happened about the year 1761, rendered the affairs of Mahomet Khuli deſperate, and obliged him to become a dependant on the bounty of Shujah-ud-Dowlah; who, in the courſe of a few months, threw him, on a charge of ſtate crimes, into priſon. Mahomet Khuli, from his valour and liberality, was held in high eſtimation in the Oude army, which in loud murmurs, and in compariſons not favourable to their Prince, warmly lamented his misfortunes. Nudjef Khan, on the capture of Allahabad, had entered into the ſervice of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, and exerted himſelf with a zeal that endangered his own ſafety, to procure the releaſe of Mahomet Khuli;* but

* Mahomet Khuli was cut off at the fort of Tillalabad: — this example diſcloſed an evil, which is uſually ſeen to pervade Aſiatic ſtates. A deſpotic Prince cannot always impart

but this officer had become an object of ſuch dread at the court of Oude, from the rumours inceſſantly circulated in his favor, that the fears of Shujah-ud-Dowlah were not allayed until the deſtruction of his priſoner had been compleated by aſſaſſination. Shujah-ud-Dowlah obtained from the King the appointment of Vizier; and being now poſſeſſed of a numerous army, and the imperial perſon, he might juſtly be conſidered the moſt powerful chief in Hindoſtan.

In the year 1763, the war broke out between the Engliſh and Caſſum Ali Khan, which after a diverſified train of ſucceſs and diſaſters, terminated in Caſſum's expulſion from the province of Bengal, and his retreat, in the latter end of the ſame year, with

impart ſo full a force to his ſyſtem of tyranny, as to shape to the ſpirit of its edicts, the minds and language of his ſubjects. Without the compendious ſavage aid of the dagger, the road to conqueſt and empire, would not perhaps have been ſo widely opened to a Timur, a Nadir Shah, or, in our day, to a Hyder Ali. When Shujah-ud-Dowlah had formed the reſolution of cutting off Mahomet Khuli, he had not yet conſolidated the ſtructure of his government. The officers of his army, Perſians, Moghuls, or Afghans, were daring turbulent men, and had large claims of pay. They ſaw in Mahomet Khuli, a brave ſoldier, of diſtinguiſhed birth, of liberal and popular manners. They had witneſſed the former treachery of Shujah-ud-Dowlah to him, and ſuſpected his future purpoſes. Though this Prince dreaded the formidable qualities of Mahomet Khuli, he equally dreaded a formal indulgence of his wiſhes. Had he ſummoned this officer to a trial, or publickly ordered his death, the danger of a revolution would have been incurred: for the low ſtate of his treaſury, a long arrear, and an inherent deficiency of military genius in the Prince, had ſtrongly operated in diminiſhing the ſubordination of the army. But ſuch was the barbarous neceſſity of the meaſure, the miſerable policy of a demi-armed deſpot, that he was compelled to maintain the ſafety of his perſon, and the government of his country, by the ſecret ſtab of a poignard.

the

the remains of his troops, and a large treaſury, into the dominions of Shujah-ud-Dowlah. The Bengal Government, which had been long duped by the evaſive replies of the Vizier to the repeated remonſtrance of his ſuccouring their enemy, diſcovered that he had drawn his army to Benares, and was preparing to invade Bahar, in conjunction with Caſſum Ali. A letter which he addreſſed to the government of Bengal, peremptorily avowed his intentions. In arrogant and contemptuous language he ſays, "that the Engliſh, "abuſing the favours conferred on them by the Emperors of Hin-"doſtan, have fomented diſturbances in the empire; and that in-"ſtead of limiting their exertions to trade, as became merchants, "they interfered in the imperial affairs, exalting and depoſing at plea-"ſure, the ſervants of the crown. He calls upon them to juſtify "their actions, and to withdraw forthwith, all their people from "the King's dominions; and in the event of diſobedience, threatens "them with the royal diſpleaſure, which he denominated *The type of* "*God's wrath.*" Though Shujah-ud-Dowlah had buoyed up Caſſum Ali with the promiſe of reinſtating him in the provinces, we cannot eaſily believe, that the man who has been recently ſeen betraying and cutting off his kinſman, who held both the claims of friendſhip and affinity, would without a manifeſt and great advantage, incur the riſk of fortune and life, in the cauſe of a ſtranger. Had the arms of the Vizier prevailed in the courſe of the war, the general tenor of his actions ſupports a fair conjecture, that he would without a ſcruple have annexed the conquered country to his own dominions.

In

In the courſe of the year 1764, intelligence was received at Calcutta, that the forces of the Vizier and Caſſum Ali, with ſome few troops attached to the King, had penetrated into the vicinity of Patna; whither our troops, on the approach of the combined army, had precipitately retired. The enemy being afterwards repulſed in aſſaulting the European trenches, retreated towards the river Soane, where the Vizier made pacific advances to the Engliſh officer, who had been authorized to negociate, but pointedly directed to demand, in the preliminary articles the ſurrender of Sombro, and the European deſerters.* The purpoſe of the Vizier, in the deſire he had ſhewn of obtaining a peace, was only to procure a ceſſation of hoſtility, that he might recruit his army. It has been even ſaid, that he endeavoured to bring over to his cauſe Jaffier Ali Khan, whom the Engliſh, on the expulſion of Caſſum, had a ſecond time advanced to the government of the provinces. The Vizier, at a future period, did not diſavow this ſuppoſed correſpondence, which appears to have been conducted on the part of Meer Jaffier, by Nundocomar,† who gave the Vizier an aſſurance of his maſter's inclination to form a ſeparate treaty. Shujah-ud-Dowlah had derived an eſſential advantage from the fears of Caſſum Ali, now ſeriouſly alarmed by the repulſe at Patna; and having firſt inveigled away his European and beſt native troops, he ſtripped him of the largeſt

* About two hundred private Europeans had deſerted to the Vizier.

† The perſon who ſuffered death at Calcutta, by a ſentence of the Supreme Court for forgery.

part of his treaſure, and military ſtores. The drift of the Vizier's negociations becoming notoriouſly manifeſt, it was reſolved that the Engliſh army ſhould move towards his camp, and decide the conteſt in the field; which after a gallant action of five hours, gave a complete victory to the Engliſh.*

THE defeat at Buxar produced obſtinate difficulties to the political and military career of the Vizier, who on that event was deſerted by all his allies. Shah Alum, in a condition ill ſuited to the title he bore, ſought an aſylum in the Engliſh camp, and loudly accuſed Shujah-ud-Dowlah of having forced the royal authority into becoming an inſtrument of his ambition, and a ſanction of his hoſtile deſigns againſt the Engliſh. This was the ſecond time that the unfortunate Shah Alum had taken refuge in an Engliſh army. Here let me direct the view of the reader to the revolutions, which within no wide compaſs of time, have affected the empire of Hindoſtan: where at the cloſe he will behold, with an awe and wonder that muſt humble the proudeſt of us to the duſt, the illuſtrious houſe af Timur ſhaken to its foundation.

IN the reign of Aurungzebe,† it may, without any violation of truth, be ſaid, that Hindoſtan, whether for its wealth, magnitude,

* The Engliſh army conſiſted of 857 Europeans, and 6215 native troops, of which, 101 Europeans, and 773 ſepoys, were killed and wounded. The army of Shujah-ud-Dowlah was computed at 40,000 men, 2000 of whom it is ſaid were ſlain in battle. The artillery taken by the Engliſh in the field, and in the purſuit of the enemy, amounted to 133 pieces of various ſizes.

† This prince died in 1707, having reigned near fifty years.

or

or military reſource, was the moſt diſtinguiſhed empire in the Aſiatic world. It muſt alſo be noticed, that the Engliſh, at that period, were not known beyond the ſea coaſts of India, where they occupied, under various reſtrictions, the profeſſion of merchants. Behold the ſcene preſented in our day, of the feeble princes of Dehli, where a near ſucceſſor of the great Aurungzebe, impelled by the deſtruction of his fortunes, is ſeen ſoliciting, in a country ſo lately under the dominion of his anceſtors, maintenance and protection from an Engliſh ſubject.*

The Vizier, who had now ſeverely felt the ſuperiority of the Engliſh arms, ſhewed a ſerious deſire of peace, but ſtill refuſed to ſubmit to the terms of the preliminary article, in the manner required by the Bengal Government. He refuſed to deliver up Caſſum Ali, and Sambro, but promiſed to employ ſome convenient inſtrument in deſtroying the one, and to expel the other from his territories. This mode of qualifying the article, not being acceded to, Colonel Munro marched with the army to Benares. The deſertion of a party of Europeans, and the retreat of our troops towards Patna, on his entering the Bahar province, had given him ſanguine hope of ſucceſs, which were wholly diſſipated by the defeat at Buxar: and from that period, he began to model his army on a plan not before practiſed by the princes of India. The

* This fact has been again exemplified in the perſon of Schamdhar Shah, the eldeſt ſon of Shah Alum; who, by the interpoſition of the Bengal Government, receives a penſion of three lacks of rupees out of the Oude revenue.

author * of a valuable manuſcript, which has largely aided this compilation, ſays, that the æra of the real conſequence and power of the Vizier may be dated from the battle of Buxar. Conformably to an uſage not unfrequent in Hindoſtan, this prince had collected a larger army than the ſources of his country could maintain; and even where the funds are competent, military payments are ever diſtributed in the native armies with a griping hand; though the moſt pernicious effects are often produced by this fallacious ſyſtem. The ſtrength of the Vizier's army, conſiſting of cavalry, and a cumbrous body of artillery, was compoſed of many nations and tribes, but chiefly of Moghuls. Theſe men, naturally violent and licentious, ill-brooked the failure of payment, and on every demand of arrears, either cauſed dangerous tumults, or forced expedients that were injurious to the civil government of his country. Orders of payment were granted on the farmers, or managers of diſtricts, on whom theſe ſoldiers lived at diſcretion, until the amount was diſcharged; giving a looſe to every ſpecies of diſorder, and barely leaving a ſum ſufficient for ſupplying the other exigencies of the ſtate. But the defeat he ſuſtained at Buxar, relieved the Vizier from his embarraſſments: for the Moghul cavalry, without making one ſpirited effort to ſuſtain the battle, were the firſt of his troops that left the field; and conſcious it ſhould ſeem of their puſilanimous conduct, they never returned to his ſtandard.

* Colonel Polier.

THE

THE Engliſh army advanced from Benares to inveſt Chunar-Ghur; but after making two unſucceſsful aſſaults it returned to Benares. Bulwunt Sing, the Hindoo Chief of the province, had accompanied the Vizier in the campaign againſt the Engliſh, with a party of troops, which were ſtationed on the north ſide of the Ganges, oppoſite to the Buxar plain. After the battle, he withdrew himſelf from the Vizier, and having effected an accommodation with Colonel Munro, he joined the Engliſh army: but, alarmed at the repulſe of Chunar-Ghur, and the Vizier's approach, he ſuddenly deſerted Benares, and his new connexion.

COLONEL Munro, reſigning about this period* the command of the army, was ſucceeded by Major Fletcher, who immediately marched out of Benares, and purſued the Vizier, who had already inveſted the town as far as Juanpour. He formed the army into two diviſions, one of which, under Major Stibbert, reduced the fort of Chunar-Ghur, and afterwards penetrated into the interior parts of the Vizier's country:—the other diviſion he led himſelf into the Allahabad diſtricts, which were ſubjected. The Vizier, not able to oppoſe the ſucceſs of theſe parties, called in a body of Mahrattas, who entered his country on the ſide of Corah,† and were defeated by the Engliſh army, then commanded by General Carnac.‡ The Mahrattas were attacked a ſecond time by this

* This occurrence happened in the beginning of the year 1765.

† This diſtrict, which is ſituated in the Allahabad territory, is bordered by the Jumna.

‡ In May, 1765.

officer,

officer, at Ackbarpour,* and driven from their ground; though not before they had plundered a great part of the European baggage. They were ſoon obliged to croſs the Jumna, which they paſſed at the ford of Culpee, where they made a ſtand; but after a ſhort action were wholly diſperſed. The Vizier had invited the Mahrattas into Oude, without making any proviſion for the payment of their ſubſidy; and, fearful that this failure might prompt them to commit an outrage on his perſon, or create tumults in his army, he never joined their party.

The affairs of the Vizier had now fallen to a low ebb; he had loſt the greater part of his country, his army was thinned by deſertions, and he was without a treaſury, or an ally. After the battle of Buxar,† full of alarms and deſpondency, he had retired into Rohilcund, where he ſolicited an aſylum for his family, and the aſſiſtance of the Rohillas. Hafiz Rhamut received him with hoſpitality, and the reſpect due to his rank: he afforded him every domeſtic conveniency, but earneſtly adviſed a peace with the Engliſh, as the certain medium of retrieving the deſolated ſtates of his fortunes. Deſtitute of every reſource for maintaining a war, and diſ-

* In May or June, 1765.

† Juſtice to a character, already diſtinguiſhed in Hindoſtan for liberality and valour, calls on me to note in this place, the name of Ahmed Khan Bungliſh, the Navaub of Furruckabad; who when urged by Colonel Munro, after the action of Buxar, to aſſiſt in completing the overthrow of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, who had ever been the avowed enemy of his houſe, ſaid that his honour forbid him to carry arms againſt the vanquiſhed.

mayed

mayed by ill fortune, the Vizier at length reſolved to throw himſelf unreſervedly on the clemency of the Engliſh. He diſpatched Monſieur Gentil, a French gentleman, to the Engliſh camp,* to obtain an actual knowledge of the diſpoſition of his enemies. This agent delivered to the commanding officer, an addreſs from the Vizier, couched in a tenor far different from his former letters. He obſerved, that the animoſities which had ariſen between them, muſt be attributed to the diſpenſations of Providence: that of this he had now manifeſt witneſs by the events which had been produced, and that he was determined to commit himſelf to the juſtice of the illuſtrious Engliſh chiefs, conſtant and unchangeable in their friendſhip. In the concluſion, written by himſelf, he ſays, "I regard not "wealth, nor the rule of dominion: your friendſhip and favour are "all I deſire. I will, pleaſe God, ſoon be with you; when you "may do that for me, which you may think beſt." Lord Clive, who at this time had arrived in Bengal, was empowered by the Government, in conjunction with General Carnac, to negotiate with the Vizier: and having met him at Allahabad, in the month of Auguſt, 1765, a treaty of peace was finally concluded. The ſubſtance was,—That there ſhould be a perpetual treaty of peace between the contracting parties.—That in the event of the dominions of either being invaded, a military aid ſhould be furniſhed by the

* Nudjef Khan was employed alſo by the Vizier on this occaſion to negotiate with the Engliſh; but that officer was more ſeriouſly engaged in accompliſhing his own purpoſes, than in procuring terms for his maſter.

other

other.—That the Vizier is not to receive Caſſum Ali, Sombro, or any Engliſh deſerters into his ſervice.—That Corah and Allahabad be ceded to the King.—That Bulwunt Sing be continued in the zemindary of Benares, which is to be conſidered a fief of the Subahdary of Oude:—And that Chunar-Ghur, a fort in that province, be given up to the Engliſh. That no duties be collected on the merchandize of the Company, in any part of the country of the Vizier. That all ſuch ſubjects or relations of the Vizier, who may have aſſiſted the Engliſh during the late war, be pardoned;—and, That this treaty remain in force with the deſcendants of the Vizier.

Thus was Shujah-ud-Dowlah reſtored to the poſſeſſion of his dominions by the victorious Engliſh, after having been reduced by their arms to the verge of ruin. The terms granted to him breathe a liberal heroic ſpirit, and conſpicuouſly diſtinguiſhed the mind from which they ſprang. The memory of the Indian hero, ill merits the ſtain impreſſed on it by Mr. Dow, who ſays, "Shujah-ud-Dowlah, was ſtill poſſeſſed of wealth, and the virtue of the conquerors, was by no means proof againſt temptation."—But it is a fact ſupported by the pureſt authority, that Lord Clive obſtinately rejected every offer of gratuity, made to him by the Vizier. Excluſive* of the articles of the treaty, a private agreement,

* The act of reinſtating the Vizier in his dominion, not only contributed to exalt the character of the Britiſh nation, but was ſtrictly conſonant to the principles of ſound policy,

ment, entered into by the contracting parties, ſtipulated, on the part of the Vizier, a payment of fifty lacks of rupees to the Engliſh Government, for defraying the expences of the war; as the Engliſh at this period, did not oſtenſibly interfere in the adminiſtration of the Bengal provincial affairs, which on the death of Meer Jaffier had devolved on his ſon Nuzzum-ud-Dowlah.

THE treaty entered into with Shujah-ud-Dowlah, was executed by this prince, on one part, and on the other by the ſubahdar of

policy. It evinces alſo a foreſight which is grievouſly verified in the events of ſucceeding times. Lord Clive, in his letter to the Company, ſays, "Our reſtoring to "Shujah-ud-Dowlah, the whole of his dominions, proceeds more from the deſire of "not extending the Company's territorial poſſeſſions, than the generous policy of attaching him for ever to our intereſts by gratitude; though this has been the apparent, "and is by many thought to be the real motive. Had we ambitiouſly attempted to "retain the conquered country, experience would ſoon have proved the impracticability of ſuch a plan. The eſtabliſhment of an increaſed army muſt have been added "to your liſt, and more chiefſhips appointed. Acts of oppreſſion and innumerable "abuſes would have been committed, which, at ſuch a diſtance from the preſidency, "could neither have been prevented, or remedied; and muſt infallibly have laid the "foundation of another war. Our old privileges and poſſeſſions would have been endangered by every ſupply we might have been tempted to afford in ſupport of the "new, and the natives muſt have finally triumphed in our inability to ſuſtain the "weight of our own ambition."—In India, it is to be noted, donations are preſented to men of power, or thoſe who are ſuppoſed to influence them, for perſonal protection, and for the ſecurity or acquiſition of property. A rejected offer is the eſtabliſhed ſignal of diſpleaſure, and either indicates its inſufficiency, or that ſome more adequate reward has been already preferred. Shujah-ud-Dowlah was at firſt alarmed at the conduct of Lord Clive, whoſe refuſal of any gift was conſtrued into a diſpoſition inimical to his intereſts. But this prince beheld the ſoldier's magnanimity with admiration, when at the concluſion of the treaty, he received, in token of friendſhip, a ring of moderate value.

Bengal, in conjunction with Lord Clive: but that all future embarraſſments might be obviated, a delegated power, authorizing the Engliſh India Company to manage and controul the revenues of the provinces, was obtained from the king. It was alſo ſtipulated, that in conſideration of the appointment of Nuzzum-ud-Dowlah to the military and executive government of the provinces, and his grant * of the civil juriſdiction to the Engliſh, the ſum of twenty-ſix lacks of rupees † ſhould be annually paid to the king, out of the revenues of Bengal. The diſtricts of Allahabad and Corah were at the ſame time diſmembered from the Vizier's territory, and ceded to Shah Alum, that he might be enabled to maintain, without a reſtraint, the dignity of his ſtation.

Though he amply experienced the liberality of the Engliſh, the Vizier had ſuffered important injuries during the war. From the revenue of Oude, which with certain diſtricts of Allahabad, was computed at one hundred and ſixty lacks of rupees, the ceſſion of Corah and Allahabad, had deducted thirty-ſix lacks; and the ravages of his own army, with the incurſions of our troops, who had proceeded as far as Lucknow, cauſed a farther decreaſe of the general produce of his country.—In acknowledgement for the ceſſion which had been made, Shah Ullum in-

* It is termed the Dewany.

† From this amount, a penſion of two lacks of rupees was beſtowed, at the interceſſion of the Engliſh, on Nudjef Khan, who was thought to have rendered them ſervice during the latter part of the Oude war.

veſted

ed the Vizier with the hereditary poſſeſſion of the province of Oude.

THIS prince was now ſeen to apply with a vigilant aſſiduity to the adminiſtration of his affairs. The revenue department was committed to the charge of men of ability and credit, who in the ſpace of a few years enabled him to diſcharge a large debt, and to accumulate a fund for the ſupply of public exigencies.

ON his arrival at Oude, after the Allahabad treaty, he called together, it is ſaid, his principal officers, and making known to them the engagements he had made with the Engliſh, he deſired their aid in performing the obligation. Through this mode of requiſition, which is often practiſed by the princes of India in time of need, the Vizier obtained ſome aid; though far ſhort of his neceſſities. His Begum, ſeeing the difficulties that ſurrounded him, and the diſtreſſed ſtate of his mind, diveſted herſelf of the jewels, and other valuable ornaments ſhe poſſeſſed, and entreated that the amount might be applied to the arrangement of his affairs. It is mentioned, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah was ſo warmly affected by this mark of the Begum's attachment, which wholly removed his embarraſſment, that he ſolemnly ſwore, he would never, while he reſided in the ſame place, abſent himſelf from her apartment after a certain hour of the night; and that he would thenceforth ever eſteem her his faithful friend and counſellor. Nor does it appear that he deviated from the vow he made to the Begum, who be-

came from that day the repoſitory of his treaſure, and all his ſecret tranſactions.

The defeat at Buxar, having relieved the Vizier from the maintenance of a turbulent crowd of cavalry, he began to introduce in his army, a ſyſtem of order and regular payment. He had ſeen that the excellency of the European troops conſiſted in diſcipline, the quality of their arms, and the ſkilful management of artillery. He therefore made ſtrenuous and unceaſing efforts in forming a body of infantry, with its requiſite eſtabliſhment of cannon, after the European manner. The undertaking was arduous, and ſuch as few Aſiatic princes could have executed. But the genius, activity, and perſeverance of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, ſurmounted the various obſtacles, which rooted prejudice and conſtitutional habit had raiſed to oppoſe him. Under the direction of ſome Frenchmen whom he had invited into his ſervice, an arſenal was founded at Fyzeabad, where guns, muſquets and ſhot, with other military ſtores, were fabricated with ſkill and expedition.—From this new magazine, about ten battalions of infantry, and a ſmall train of artillery, were equipped. Though this body was formed at the expence of large ſums, and much labour, ſuch judicious arrangements had been adopted for the government of his country, that ſufficient funds were created to defray the charge, and to produce a reſpectable treaſury. The cavalry, which at the battle of Buxar amounted to 30,000, appears at this time to have been

been reduced to little more than 5,000 men. The vizier derived an eſſential benefit from the Engliſh garriſon, that was ſtationed at Allahabad, which keeping that quarter in awe, relieved him from the neceſſary expence of protecting a frontier country.

In the year 1768, Shujah-ud-Dowlah ſaw himſelf in the poſſeſſion of a well appointed army, a treaſury competent to its charge, and a flouriſhing productive territory. This quick progreſs, in endeavouring to diſſolve the ſubordinate connexion into which he had been forced, and to extend his power, attracted the notice of Colonel Smith, who was ſtationed at Allahabad.—This officer repreſented the conduct of Oude, as dangerous to the intereſt of the nation, and demanding an immediate interpoſition. The council, rouſed by this information, deputed Meſſrs. Cartier, Ruſſell, and Colonel Smith, to the Vizier, to expoſtulate on the tendency of his military preparations; which indicated, they obſerved, a want of confidence in their friendſhip and ſupport. The deputies held a conference with the Vizier at Benares, in the month of November, 1768; when after much acrimonious altercation, he conſented, though with a deep mortification and reluctance, to limit the ſtrength of his troops to the following number and denomination:

Cavalry,

Cavalry, — — —	10,000
Ten battalions of ſepoys, including officers of every rank, — —	10,000
The Nujjeeb regiment of matchlock-men,	5,000
A corps of artillery, not to exceed —	500
Irregulars, not to be clothed, diſciplined, or armed, after the manner of the Engliſh ſepoys, or Nujjeeb regiment, — —	9,500
	35,000

The Vizier conſidered this reſtriction as no leſs unjuſt, than it was diſgraceful to him; but, incapable of avowedly oppoſing the requiſition of ſuch powerful and jealous allies, he reſolved to execute his plans with more addreſs, though without any eſſential deviation from the object that biaſſed all his actions: and it is a well known fact, that he did not, in conſequence of the treaty of Benares, diſmiſs one ſoldier from his ſervice. His proceedings were conducted with caution, and he was ſucceſsful in procuring, amongſt the Engliſh themſelves, zealous and able advocates; but the Vizier ſaw that his ambition and ſchemes of aggrandiſement, would ever be encountered by the jealouſy of the Engliſh, whom he now beheld with miſtruſt and reſentment; and knowing the French were the common enemy of our nation, the Vizier held out many inducements to engage their aſſiſtance.

In the year 1772, a Mahratta army, commanded by the chiefs, Scindia, Halcar, and Hurry Punt, penetrating into Hindoſtan, laid waſte the Duab, and poſſeſſed themſelves of the Etajoh diſtricts, together with all the territory of Ahmed Khan Bungiſh, except the town and environs of Furruckabad. An invaſion ſo formidable had alarmed the Rohilla chiefs, who, on the approach of the Mahrattas, ſolicited the Vizier to procure the aid of an Engliſh brigade; for which they offered the ſum of forty lacks of rupees. The Vizier, anxious for the ſafety of his own country, on the confines of which the enemy were already encamped, accepted, without heſitation, a propoſal that would enable him to defray the expences of a body of troops, from which he himſelf would derive an eſſential benefit; and he, ſome time in the year 1772, applied to the Engliſh Government, for a ſupply of forces to defend his dominions againſt the threatened invaſion of the Mahrattas. Conformably to this requiſition, an Engliſh brigade proceeded to Benares, whence a detachment of three native battalions, joined by the forces of the Vizier, marched to the frontiers of Rohilcund; the interiour parts of which the Mahrattas were then laying waſte. The commencement of the periodical rains, and the near approach of the combined army, obliged them to rapidly croſs the Ganges. The Mahrattas, in the following year,* again entered Rohilcund where they committed much devaſtation; but they retreated on

* 1773.

the

the appearance of the Vizier's army, which had been reinforced by a complete English brigade.

On the night previously to the arrival of the combined for in the vicinity of the Mahratta encampment, which was form on the west side of the Ganges, a large body of their cavalry cr the river, and, dispersing the Rohilla troops, they carried off med Khan, one of the principal officers. The brigade reached t place of this action about break of day, when they observed th Mahrattas passing the river,* then fordable, with precipitation and a distant cannonade ensued, in which the enemy lost a few men and horses: but they soon retired from that quarter, nor hav they since appeared in arms on the east side of the Ganges.

The Vizier, on the retreat of the enemy, demanded the sum of forty lacks of rupees from Hafiz Rhamut Khan, who being a this time the superiour officer of the Rohilla forces, and the conductor of their political measures, was urged to fulfil the engagement. Hafiz represented, that the Rohillas had not received the stipulated aid, which, if furnished in the preceding year, might have prevented the injuries done by the enemy; and that the present campaign had been maintained by the Rohilla troops: yet he said, that though the other chiefs should withhold their quota of the claimed amount, he would discharge his proportion to the extent of his ability.

* At Ramgaut, a ford of the Ganges in Rohilcund.—Vide Rennell's map.

The

THE ambitious diſpoſition of the Vizier, and the diſregard he had hitherto ſhewn to the dictates of juſtice, or honour, afford no ſlender authority for ſuppoſing that he ſecretly rejoiced at the refuſal of the Rohillas to execute the whole tenor of their agreement. In promoting and extending his ſchemes of conqueſt and grandeur, the Vizier muſt have ever been expoſed to the counteracting power of the Rohillas, who were all ſoldiers, and ſo far from reſpecting his military capacity, they treated it with contempt and deriſion. The conqueſt of Rohilcund muſt have therefore naturally compoſed an eſſential part of the Vizier's general plan of aggrandizement.

AFTER his return from the Mahratta expedition, he deſired a conference with the Governor of Bengal, for the purpoſe of adjuſting certain political meaſures. Mr. Haſtings, aſſociated with ſome other members of the Government, was deputed to treat with the Vizier at Benares; and the principal object of the meeting was aſcribed to the motive of fixing the weſtern poſſeſſions of the Engliſh, on a firmer and more permanent baſis, by ſome final arrangement of the territories that had been aſſigned to the king.

SINCE the period of the treaty of 1765, Shah Alum had remained at Allahabad, where he had enjoyed a ſplendid and a quiet retreat; but his wiſhes ſeeming to be centered in enjoying the reſidence of his capital, he proceeded thither in 1771: — ſacrificing, at once, the ſubſtantial benefits which had been conferred on him

by the bounty of the Engliſh. The King was alſo excited to this meaſure by his ſervants, who ſaw the influence of a foreign power depriving them of the common advantages of their ſtation, and of that ſway which his diſpoſition naturally invited. The repeated ſolicitation of the king for troops, to eſtabliſh his power at Dehli, were not acceded to in a manner that promiſed any ſucceſs: he procured two native battalions that had been maintained by him at Allahabad, but without the complement of European officers; and this party, with about 20,000 irregular troops, commanded by Najeb Khan, arrived in the latter end of the year 1771, at Dehli.*

The principal events of the life of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, being ſlenderly connected with the hiſtory of Shah Alum, an occaſional reference to it is only neceſſary; and it may here be obſerved, that the meaſures of an Indian court, too frequently operating through the many channels of deceit, or by the more daring acts of treachery, would offer little inſtruction to the European reader, unleſs they lead to decided revolutions, or affect the general ſyſtem of government.

The Vizier did not depend upon the court of Dehli, for the ſucceſs of his ſchemes, or the advancement of his power. He maintained however an influence there, by the agency of Ellich

* It is ſaid, that the King's journey was haſtened by the intelligence of Zabitah Khan's ſeizure of Dehli, where he committed many outrages; even, according to popular report, in the King's haram.

Khan,

Khan, one of his favourite ſervants, who gratifying the King by opportune donations, procured the formal inveſtiture of ſuch territories, as the Vizier had either previouſly ſeized, or meditated the conqueſt of. But we are not to ſuppoſe that the poſſeſſion of ſuch inſtruments, which had a conſtant circulation, and flowed from too weak a ſource to act with efficacy, would eſſentially promote the deſigns of this prince.

That ſome parts of the treaty now entered into, between the Engliſh Government and the Vizier, may be clearly underſtood, it is neceſſary to notice, that in a ſhort time after the departure of Shah Alum from the territories which had been aſſigned to him, the right was judged to revert to the Engliſh Government. On the King's junction with a body of Mahrattas, then ſtationed in the vicinity of Agra, he was compelled to make a formal ceſſion to them of the province of Corah, and the diſtricts of Currah. This ſurrender, to a power deemed hoſtile to the welfare of Bengal, afforded a plea, equally founded on the rights of conqueſt and good policy, to aſſume the relinquiſhed territory; and the Vizier, who had with regret made the ſacrifice, expreſſing, after the King's departure, an earneſt deſire of recovering the diſmembered country, his requeſt, with certain qualifications, was granted.*

* The treaty of 1773, contains little important matter, nor would I fatigue the reader with its peruſal, did I not apprehend, that ſome ſerious reflections will occur, in comparing it with the events of the ſucceeding year. It is ſpecified, "That whereas, "in

In the conference at Benares, it was alſo ſtipulated, that the Vizier ſhould confirm Cheyt Sing, the ſon and ſucceſſor of Bullwunt Sing, in the poſſeſſion of Benares, and its dependencies.

The

" in the treaty concluded at Allahabad, on the 16th of Auguſt 1765, between the " Vizier and the Company, it is expreſſed that the diſtricts of Corah and Allahabad " were given to His Majeſty for his expences; and whereas His Majeſty abandoned " the poſſeſſion of the aforeſaid diſtricts, and even has given a ſunnud for Corah and " Currah to the Mahrattas, to the great prejudice of both the Vizier and Engliſh " Company, and contrary to the meaning of the ſaid treaty; he hath thereby forfeited " his right to the ſaid diſtricts, which have reverted to the Company, from whence he " received them: it is therefore agreed, that the aforeſaid diſtricts ſhall be put into " the poſſeſſion of the Vizier, on the following conditions, and that, in the ſame " manner as the province of Oude, and the other dominions of the Vizier are poſ- " ſeſſed by him: ſo ſhall he poſſeſs Corah, and Currah, and Allahabad, for ever.—He " ſhall by no means, or under any pretence, be liable to any obſtructions in the afore- " ſaid countries from the Company, and the Engliſh chiefs, and excluſive of the money " now ſtipulated, no mention or requeſt ſhall by any means be made to him for any " thing elſe due on this account. This agreement ſhall be obſerved by the Engliſh " chiefs, gentlemen of the council, and the Company, nor ſhall it be broken or devi- " ated from.

" CONDITIONS:

" He ſhall pay to the Company fifty lacks of Sicca Rupees, according to the currency of the province of Oude, viz. - - - 50,00,000

" In ready money. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	20,00,000
" In two years after the date hereof—viz. the firſt year - - -	15,00,000
" The ſecond year. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - -	15,00,000
Sa. Rs.	50,00,000

" To prevent any diſpute ariſing, concerning the payment which ſhall be made by the Vizier for the Company's troops that may march to his aſſiſtance, it is agreed,

" that

The Vizier acquieſced in this meaſure with reluctance, and marks of extreme diſguſt. Not that he wiſhed to deprive this chief of his poſſeſſions, but he was averſe to a foreign interference in behalf of a perſon whom he conſidered his immediate vaſſal, and who, by obtaining ſo ſtrong a ſupport, would naturally deviate from that ſtate of ſubordination in which ſuch landholders are placed under an effective Mahometan government. Shujah-ud-Dowlah, though accompliſhed in his manners, and endowed with an addreſs that diſtinguiſhed him among the politeſt of his countrymen, could not ſuppreſs the indignation he felt at the Engliſh Governor's deſire, to have Cheyt Sing ſeated in his preſence. But the Vizier was then preparing a ſuit * of ſuch an importance to

"that the expences of a brigade ſhall be computed at two lacks and ten thouſand "(2,10,000) Sicca rupees per month, according to the currency of the province of Oude. "—By a brigade, is meant as follows—

"Two battalions of Europeans,
"Six battalions of Sepoys, and
"One company of artillery.

"The expence of the ſaid troops ſhall be defrayed by the Vizier, from the time "they ſhall have paſſed the border of the province; and excluſive of the above men- "tioned ſum, no more on any account ſhall be demanded from him. Should the Com- "pany and the Engliſh chiefs have occaſion to ſend for the troops of the Vizier, the "Company, and the Engliſh chiefs, ſhall alſo pay their expence in the like manner.— "Signed, ſealed, and ſolemnly ſworn to, by the contracting parties, September the "7th, 1773."

* A ſupply of troops for the conqueſt of Rohilcund.

his

his ſchemes, that had his reſentments been keener, they would have been ſacrificed to its accompliſhment.

THAT he might the more effectually prevent Engliſh merchants or their agents from reſiding or negociating in his country, the Vizier obtained permiſſion at this time to impoſe large duties on the importation of Bengal, and European merchandize. He had witneſſed the rapacious monopoly which the ſervants of the Company had exerciſed in Bengal, and knew that many of the calamities which had befallen that country, might be juſtly aſcribed to the European aſſumption of its commerce, which had been conducted on terms ſo partial to themſelves, that almoſt every other trader was obliged to purchaſe an European name to cover his property. It is ſaid, that when Shujah-ud-Dowlah has been ſolicited to receive an Engliſh merchant into his country, he has offered him an immediate ſum of money, rather than riſk the admiſſion of a ſyſtem that appeared wholly deſtructive of the true principles of trade.

ON the concluſion of the Benares treaty, the Vizier carried his arms againſt the Mahrattah garriſons in the Duab, which he ſeverally expelled; and extended his conqueſts as far to the weſtward as the Fort of Jaunſy.* The main body of the Mahrattah army having moved into the Decan, without leaving a ſufficient force to

* Jaunſy ſtands on the weſtern extremity of the Kalpy territory. See Rennell's map.

maintain

maintain their Duab poſſeſſions, they fell to the Vizier without reſiſtance. A large diviſion of the country which he acquired in this campaign, had pertained to Ahmed Khan Bunguſh, the late chief of Furruckabad, who was ſucceeded by his adopted ſon, Muzzuffer Jung; a youth, whom the Mahrattas ſoon ſtripped of his moſt valuable diſtricts. The Vizier, to induce the neutrality of the Patans of Furruckabad, during his Duab expedition, promiſed in the event of the Mahrattah expulſion, to reſtore to Muzzuffer Jung all the territory that had been poſſeſſed by Ahmed Khan. That the conduct of an Indian prince, in purſuit of a favourite object, or in the gratification of his ambition, may be ſpecifically viewed, I will inſert the Vizier's treaty with Muzzuffer Jung, in which is ſeen a ſolemn proteſtation made to God, the moſt endearing terms of friendſhip and affection pledged to man, boldly uſed as the inſtruments of treachery and diſhonour. The ceremony of an oath is eſteemed amongſt the preſent race of Mahometans, a ſhallow trite artifice, and is only adopted by thoſe, who, from a want of ſtronger reſource, are driven to the neceſſity of adopting ſecondary aids.

The treaty ſets forth, "That in conſequence of the friend-
"ſhip, that has for a long time ſubſiſted between Muzzuffer Jung,
"and my anceſtors, and me, I have adopted him for my child.
"By the grace of God, I will do whatever may be for his good
"or advantage. I will conſider his buſineſs, his friends, and his
"enemies, as mine; and until our laſt breath, we engage for our-
"ſelves,

" ſelves, and for our deſcendants and ſucceſſors, that we will re-
" main united.—I ſwear, by the Almighty God, by his Prophet
" and the Holy Koran, never to vary or depart from this treaty,
" upon condition that my beloved ſon Muzzuffer Jung do adhere
" to it alſo on his part. In witneſs whereof, theſe lines are writ-
" ten in the ſtyle of a treaty. By the grace of God, whenever
" the Mahrattas are conquered, and driven out of the country,
" and mine enemies expelled, I will deliver up to my dearly beloved
" ſon, Muzzuffer Jung, the territories he formerly poſſeſſed, and
" which he has loſt in the war, to the Mahrattas. Dated accord-
" ing to the Chriſtian æra, January, 1774."

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH did expel the Mahrattas from the Bunguſh territory; but he did not fulfil the tenor of his treaty with Muzzuffer Jung, to whom, on the ſucceſs of the Mahratta campaign, he gave a ſmall ſum of money, but no part of the country which had been ſo ſolemnly promiſed.

THE grand object of the Vizier's ambition had ripened into maturity, and was now publicly avowed: — he applied to the Engliſh Government for a body of troops, to aſſiſt in the conqueſt of Rohilcund, the chiefs of which, he repreſented, had refuſed to perform their engagements with him, and had ever been the inveterate enemies of his houſe. The Government appear to have been deeply embarraſſed by the Vizier's requiſition: they ſaw the danger of carrying their arms againſt a remote and warlike people, and they felt a difficulty in framing the cauſe of a war againſt a nation

from

from whom they had received no injury. After an indecisive deliberation of some days, they consented to commit the unreserved management of the Oude negotiation to the Governor.—He also expressed an aversion to extend the military operations of the English to so distant a quarter, and proposed, that a demand of such magnitude should be made for the aid required, that the Vizier would necessarily be induced to withdraw the application. Conformably to this counsel, an English brigade was tendered to the Vizier, for the purpose of promoting the conquest of Rohilcund; on the condition of four lacks of rupees being paid to the Company on the completion of the service, and the monthly subsidy of two lacks and ten thousand rupees, during the residence of the troops in his dominions. The conduct of Government does not authorize an inference that the Vizier would ultimately refuse his assent to these terms; for an order was dispatched to the factory at Patna, directing that the motions of a brigade stationed in that quarter, should, without further communication with the Presidency, be directed by the future instructions of the Vizier, who was at the same time advised of the measure that had been adopted. —The Vizier, thus powerfully aided in the prosecution of his favorite scheme, conducted his operations with celerity. The Governor had not informed the Council of the Vizier's designs on Rohilcund until the latter end of November,* yet the brigade

* 1773.

marched in the following January, and in the ſhort ſpace of three months,* the Rohillas were completely defeated in a pitched battle that was fought in the centre of their country. Near five thouſand of them were killed and wounded; but the loſs became irretrievable by the death of their chief, who was ſlain in the action. Hafiz Rhamut, though he bled in an honourable cauſe, merited a milder fate. He had never been the enemy of the Engliſh, and he had protected Shujah-ud-Dowlah at the loweſt ebb † of his fortunes.

After the engagement, Fyze-ullah Khan retreated with a large party of the routed army to Lall Dong,‡ where he took poſt on the ſide of a ſteep hill. The Vizier, accompanied by the Engliſh brigade, inveſted the intrenchments of the Rohillas, who being reduced to various diſtreſs, from a confined unhealthy ſituation, and ſerving under a leader of no military talents, they propoſed earneſt terms of accommodation to the Engliſh commanding officer; who urged, and prevailed on the Vizier, after a long ſtruggle, to liberate Fyze-ullah, and cede to him a certain territory in Rohilcund. This chief, before the war, held the Jaguir of Rampour, rated at five lacks of rupees; but this con-

* The battle was fought on the 23d of April, 1774, near the village of Teſſunah. —For the ſituation, Vide Rennell's map.

† Shujah-ud-Dowlah, with his family, took refuge in Rohilcund after the battle of Buxar.

‡ The northern boundary of Rohilcund.

vention *

vention * inveſted him with a revenue of fifteen lacks, and the moſt fertile quarter of Rohilcund.

FYZE-ULLAH KHAN, having concluded the negotiation, which was wholly effected by the Engliſh officer, with whom a counterpart of the treaty was executed that the ſanction of the Company might be obtained, he paid, according to a previous ſtipulation, a gratuity of fifteen lacks of rupees to the Vizier. The change of

* "Whereas friendſhip is eſtabliſhed between me and Fyze-ullah Khan.—I give "unto him Rampour, and ſome other diſtricts dependent thereon, altogether amounting to 14 lacks and 75,600 rupees yearly; and I direct that the ſaid Fyze-ullah "Khan do on no account take into his pay above 5000 ſoldiers. I engage, at all times "and on all occaſions, to preſerve the honor of the ſaid Fyze-ullah Khan, and to act "for his good and advantage, on the condition, that he ſhall look to no other power "but mine for ſupport; that he engages to correſpond with no other ſtate than the "Engliſh. Our enemies and friends are mutual. Fyze-ullah Khan ſhall aſſiſt me "with 2 or 3000 troops according to his ability. If I go in perſon on any expedition, "or to any part of my dominions, Fyze-ullah Khan ſhall attend me; and as the number of 5000 troops which Fyze-ullah Khan is allowed at all times to keep up, is "ſmall, and he may be unable to bring them all into the field with him, in ſuch caſe, "I will place from 2 to 4000 men under his command, that he may join me with becoming dignity; the pay of theſe additional troops to be found by me. It is upon "this abovementioned conſiderations that I conſent to ſettle upon Fyze-ullah Khan "the ſaid country, and engage to ſupport his intereſts. If he continue firm in the "performance of this treaty, by the grace of God, I never will be backward in conſulting his advantage and good.—He is to cauſe all the Rohillas to croſs the river "Ganges. Sworn by the Holy Koran, calling God and his Prophets to witneſs to "the performance of theſe articles."

Extracted from the Bengal Records of 1774. *Col. Champion's Seal.* *Rujjeb 1188 Hegira. October, 1774; A. D.*

the ſyſtem of the Bengal Government which began at this time, and was hoſtile to the councils of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, might alſo have impelled him to a ſpeedy concluſion of the Rohilla treaty.

In the year 1783, Fyze-ullah was liberated from all military vaſſalage to the Vizier, on the payment of a ſum of money to the Engliſh reſident at Lucknow, which was applied to the ſervice of the Bengal Government.

But had Shujah-ud-Dowlah been permitted to purſue the ſyſtem of policy which had been obſerved to the other Rohilla chiefs, Fyze-ullah would at this day have languiſhed in poverty and dependance. Happily for this chief and the reſidue of his nation who have now fertilized and made populous a large tract of country, a powerful advocate came forth in their behalf, who though the leader of a ſubſidiary body, aſſumed in an honourable cauſe, the efficient power of protection. The Vizier, in an acrimonious complaint preferred againſt this officer, obſerves, "that "as it had been his abſolute determination to extirpate the Ro-"hillas, and for that purpoſe requeſted the aſſiſtance of the Eng-"liſh troops, was it not highly improper in the commanding "officer, to enter into ſuch a correſpondence without his per-"miſſion?" The Vizier had in truth reſolved to deſtroy the Rohillas, or expel them; and this reſolution ſhaped the whole form of his conduct during the campaign in Rohilcund. He entertained

tained ſo rooted a dread of this people from their valour and haughty ſpirit, or perhaps a conſciouſneſs of the injuries he had already committed, that he would not permit thoſe that were ſubjected to remain in any part of his dominions.

At the cloſe of this general deſcription of the progreſs of the Engliſh arms in Rohilcund, [for the aids afforded by the Vizier can ſcarcely claim a notice,] I will inſert ſome obſervations on the tendency and effects of our engagements with the Vizier in the reduction of that territory. It is manifeſtly ſeen, that the Government of Bengal were either unacquainted with the virtue and extent of their compact with the Vizier, or that they avowedly aſſiſted him in ſtripping one of their allies of his hereditary poſſeſſion. It was roundly agreed to inveſt the Vizier with the dominion of Rohilcund, the limits of which were carried to the mountains on the north, and to the river Ganges on the weſt. Yet a large tract of the northern diviſion of Rohilcund, was held by Zabitah Khan,* with whom the Engliſh were at this time in alliance, and bound by a treaty "to confirm to him his antient dominions, to conſider "him as a dependant on their favor, and that their friends and "enemies ſhould be mutual."

The Vizier, previouſly to the invaſion of Rohilcund, had brought over to his intereſts Zabitah Khan; who though of the Rohilla ſect, and of near affinity to many of the chiefs [illegible]

* The ſon of Najeb-ud-Dowlah.

with the Vizier againſt the cauſe of his nation. But he was ſeverely puniſhed for his treachery, and the diſhonorable connection he had formed; for the Vizier, after the compleſion of the conqueſt, aſſerting that Zabitah Khan had during the war maintained a correſpondence with the enemy, ſeized on all his territory eaſt of the Ganges; and it remains at this day annexed to the Government of Oude.

THE conduct of the Vizier alſo to the family of Mohubullah Khan,* evinces that every ſentiment of honour and faith fell before the impulſe of his ambition. This chief, who held the town and diſtricts of Biſſouly, either from having been involved in a domeſtic conteſt with thoſe Rohilla ſtates who appeared in arms againſt the Vizier, or from other motives, did not engage in the war. Before the army moved into Rohilcund, he ſued the Vizier for protection in behalf of his family and property, which the prince, in ſtrong and unequivocal terms, pledged to preſerve in ſafety and honour. On this faith, Mohubullah Khan remained during the campaign at Biſſouly; but on the Vizier's arrival at that place, he was, with his family, thrown into a rigorous confinement, pillaged of every article of value, and his women were treated with a diſgraceful ſeverity. In an addreſs of Mohubullah to the Engliſh commanding officer, in which were alſo incloſed the original letters of the Vizier, granting an unre-

* The ſon of Dhoondy Khan, who has been already noticed in the Rohilla ſketches.

ſerved

ſerved protection, he writes, "The Vizier has deprived us of our "country, of our riches, and even of our honour; and, not con-"tented with that, he is going to ſend us priſoners to Fyzeabad. "We deſire no country, no riches, no houſe; but at Biſſouly are "the tombs of our family — near them, and under ſome ſhade, "we beg permiſſion to paſs, as mendicants, the remainder of our "days. Relying on the Vizier's promiſes, we remained in this "country; otherwiſe, we ſhould, like the other chiefs, have fled, "and preſerved our character and honour: theſe, with our effects, "he has taken away; and how he has diſhonoured us, is known "to all." The Vizier is ſaid to have exerciſed an indecent rigour towards the female priſoners of the Rohillas, who fell into his hands; and he is accuſed alſo of having violated the chaſtity of ſome women of the family of Hafiz Rhatnut.* The laſt allegation is not ſupported by any ſubſtantial authority; nor indeed, are ſuch acts of outrage common amongſt the moſt intemperate Mahometans, who, however prone to other exceſſes, are not often ſeen tearing aſunder the veil of the haram.

The oppreſſions and rapacity of the Vizier, in the courſe of the conqueſt, affixed a deep ſtain on the Engliſh character. The vanquiſhed naturally ſuppoſed, that the hand which had led him to victory, could have been efficiently exerted in reſtraining his

* Shujah-ud-Dowlah was impreſſed with ſo lively a ſenſe of indignation, at the diſgrace, as well as the injuſtice of this charge, that he burſt into tears, when he was informed that it had been believed by the Engliſh commanding officer.

violence.

violence. The cauſe ſpecifically held out by the Vizier for making war on the Rohillas, was their with-holding payment of the ſum which they had offered for the ſervice of an Engliſh brigade. It has been ſhewn that the brigade did not arrive in Rohilcund at a due ſeaſon: for the Mahrattas had, in two ſucceſſive years, committed wide devaſtations in that country, and were leaving it when the Engliſh troops appeared. The arguments uſed by the Vizier, in ſupport of the invaſion, were weakly maintained, on either a principle of equity or reaſon: and his purpoſes might have been effected without the exhibition of ſo wretched a cloak. In countries where the paths of rectitude and honour are more preciſely deſcribed and adhered to than in Hindoſtan, the political uſage of princes does not widely deviate from the conduct purſued by Shujah-ud-Dowlah in inſuring ſucceſs to his ſchemes of ambition. But what can be urged in vindication of the Engliſh, who, to gratify a rapacious ally, and without even acquiring an adequate benefit to the ſtate, effected the deſtruction of a nation, againſt whom they could not fabricate a ſpecious cauſe of complaint?

The ſubject of the Rohilla war hath already been ſo widely dilated by thoſe who promoted, and thoſe who have condemned, the meaſure, that I am fearful of giving diſguſt by any further enlargement; nor does the diſcuſſion properly belong to the purpoſe of this eſſay: yet I cannot refrain from pointing at the ill policy of the Engliſh, in annexing Rohilcund to the dominion of the Vizier. The injuſtice of the act, with the ſevere effects that

followed,

followed, are now admitted by moſt claſſes of men; and has imprinted a deep ſtain on the Britiſh name in India. The Government of Bengal, in aſſigning a reaſon for inveſting the Vizier with the poſſeſſion of Rohilcund, aſſerted, that the more powerful this prince became, the greater advantage would accrue to them from his alliance. The diſpoſition of Shujah-ud-Dowlah muſt have been ill known to the Engliſh, or they would not have urged ſo frail an argument. Jealous of authority, and inſatiably ambitious, he had already felt a keen reſentment at the encroachments of Bengal on his prerogative, and national power, the preſervation of which had long directed the ſpirit of his councils, and the actions of his government. The Rohilla nation formed a weighty counterpoiſe to the real ſtrength and reſtleſs temper of the Vizier, who finding himſelf checked by a people naturally intereſted in keeping a vigilant watch over his actions, leaſt they ſhould ſuffer by too great an increaſe of his power, muſt have been neceſſitated to depend on the Engliſh, to repel the encroachment or attacks of the Rohillas, and the other northern ſtates. Our poſſeſſions in India, virtually acquired by the ſuperiority of arms, and the eminent abilities of Britiſh officers, can only be preſerved, after maintaining that ſuperiority, by a ſteady adherence to the principles of juſtice and public faith,—virtues which did not conſpicuouſly diſtinguiſh the laſt negotiation with the Vizier: nor were the dictates of common policy conſulted, unleſs the axiom becomes manifeſt, which

even the moſt viſionary politician would ſtartle at, that nations may be linked together by the bonds of gratitude and friendſhip.

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH was yet employed in arranging the affairs of the conquered province, when a diſorder which had for ſome time afflicted him, broke out with ſuch violence, that he was obliged to retire to Fyzeabad, where he died in the month of January 1775, at the age of 46 years. His death was occaſioned by a venereal tumour, that had been unſkilfully treated by a French ſurgeon, who adminiſtered to him ſo large a quantity of mercury, that his ſtrength, then nearly exhauſted, was overpowered by the force of the medicine. The violence of the complaint had been removed by a profeſſional gentleman of the brigade, who ſerved in the Rohilla expedition; but being called into the provinces, the cure was not completed. The diſputes of the Vizier and the Engliſh commanding officer, had ariſen to ſuch a pitch of inveteracy, that though the life of the Vizier was the pledge, and ultimately the ſacrifice, he would not ſolicit the attendance of the field ſurgeon.

SHUJAH-UD-DOWLAH died at a period when his thirſt of dominion had been largely indulged, and his power had ariſen perhaps to its meridian height. The new members of the Bengal Government who arrived in the preceding year,* were inimical to

* 1774.

his

his public intereſts, and ſeemed even to bear an enmity to his perſon. The projects with which his mind teemed would ſoon have matured, and produced the criſis of his fortune; when he would either have ariſen into powerful independence, or ſunk into a ſtation leſs reſpectable than that now occupied by his ſucceſſor. His views were diſcloſed with ſo little reſerve, and he perſonally gave ſuch unequivocal teſtimony of his future deſigns, that his political character was arraigned by all men of diſcernment. He frequently told his courtiers, that after the conqueſt of Rohilcund, he would penetrate into the territory of the Mahrattas, and take an exemplary vengeance for the ravages they had committed in Hindoſtan. He evinced alſo an anxious deſire to attain the direction of affairs at Dehli, and controul the remains of military power yet preſerved to the houſe of Timur. But in this proſpect he was thwarted by Nudjef Khan, who had the office of captain-general, and who had acquired, by his ſucceſſes in the field, an extenſive tract of country wholly independant of the imperial authority.

The Engliſh had been taught to believe, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah, from a principle of ſelf-intereſt, was attached to their nation; that aware of the inſufficiency of his own ability, either to encreaſe his dominion, or reſiſt the attacks of an enemy, he would ultimately depend on them for protection. However juſt their opinions might have been of the real ſtrength and reſource of this prince, it would appear that he himſelf held them, (eſpecially when augmented by the conqueſt of Rohilcund, and other ex-

pected aids), adequate to the accompliſhment of purpoſes, which bore no relation to an Engliſh policy. His pride and ambition, which were exceſſive, had been mortified by many acts of the Bengal Government; and the reſtrictions impoſed by the Allahabad deputation, he deemed violently oppreſſive, and an infringement of the treaty that had been made by Lord Clive. But concealing his reſentment with an admirable addreſs, he diligently ſearched for expedients to diſſolve a connection which placed him in ſo ſubordinate a condition. Shujah-ud-Dowlah had felt, and reſolved to adopt, the European diſcipline. Excluſive of the French who were employed in forming his troops, he had ſolicited a ſupply of Engliſh officers to accompliſh his purpoſe. But ſubſequently to the application, the Government of Calcutta had been new modeled, and ſeeing it hoſtile to his intereſts, he refuſed the ſervice of any perſon who held a commiſſion in the Engliſh army. I have obtained an information, ſupported by documents of ſubſtantial authority, but which I am not empowered to bring forward, that Shujah-ud-Dowlah, in the laſt moments of his life, was actively employed in forming ſchemes of independence, and even purſuing meaſures to extirpate the Engliſh power in India. The French officers in the ſervice of this prince, improving on his ill humour to the Engliſh Government, repreſented to him that an alliance with France might be made the effectual inſtrument of emancipating his country from controul, and enable him to proſecute with ſucceſs his ſchemes of conqueſt. The Vizier eagerly hearkened to this

this language, and agreed to open the negotiation; but the keenneſs with which he commenced it, prevented his ſeeing the difficulties which would have obſtructed its purpoſe. It was ſtipulated by the agents at Oude, that a body of French troops ſhould land on the coaſt of Cambay, and marching acroſs the upper part of the peninſula, enter the weſtern frontier of Oude. Had the Vizier made the experiment, he would have witneſſed the impracticability of the project, and the viſionary ſchemes of theſe French adventurers. But a miniſtry of France, it is to be preſumed, would have altogether rejected the meaſure, and have foreſeen that the attempt of conveying an European force over ſo large a tract of country, inhabited by powerful military tribes, who entertain a common jealouſy of Europeans, muſt have been fruſtrated by the ſurrounding impediments. The fact which is now related, ſtands accompanied with ſuch a variety of corroborating proofs, that I am induced firmly to believe its authenticity. Shujah-ud-Dowlah who felt the force of the Engliſh power both in its open and concealed directions, acted conſiſtently with the ſtation he occupied, in endeavouring to remove a preſſure ſo galling and diſgraceful; and had he lived until a later period, when the Engliſh nation in India was encountered by a hoſt of aſſailants, and ſinking under an accumulated load of inteſtine calamities, we might have been ſeverely puniſhed for having too powerfully armed the hands of this prince. His memory, I truſt, will not be injured, if I place Shujah-ud-Dowlah at the criſis adverted to, amongſt the foremoſt of

the

the enemies of the Engliſh; when, to the extent of his abilities, he would probably have been ſeen making ſtrong exertions to wipe off his former diſgrace, and gratify a private reſentment.

HAVING marked the more conſpicuous outline of the tranſactions of Shujah-ud-Dowlah, I will cloſe it with ſome deſultory obſervations on his character. In treating of the perſonal qualities of this Prince, it muſt be noticed, that they pertain to a native of Hindoſtan, whoſe mind, fettered by religious prejudices and the effects of a narrowed education, is rarely incited to the ſearch of knowledge. The ſame actions which are countenanced, and even applauded by a Mahometan, would in the European world be often viewed with diſguſt, or fall under a ſevere reprehenſion of the Law. Under this preliminary ſanction, it may with juſtice be ſaid, that the Prince who has been the ſubject of this treatiſe, poſſeſſed a penetrating underſtanding, and an active mind. His diſpoſition, when no grand object interpoſed, had a general tendency to promote the welfare of his ſubjects: and he was always averſe to acts of barren cruelty.

IN the year 1765, Shujah-ud-Dowlah's revenue did not amount to more than one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds, and his army had been ſo much reduced by the effects of the defeat at Buxar, that it was incapable of defending his territory; yet at the expiration of ten years, the period of his death, he held a dominion which produced a revenue of three hundred and ſixty thouſand pounds; and he maintained in his ſervice, one hundred thouſand fighting

fighting men. When it is admitted, that in the acquiſition of dominion, in maintaining an important ſtation amongſt the ſtates of India, and in the ſalutary government of his country, this Prince diſplayed an enlarged genius, it muſt alſo be allowed, that he derived a real ſtrength, and a large portion of political conſequence, from the intimate connection he had formed with the government of Bengal; over which, he ſeemed, at one period, to have exerciſed a prevailing influence. Had Shujah ud-Dowlah diſſolved his Engliſh alliance, the ſecurity of his country, and the execution of his ſchemes, would have chiefly depended on the force of his army, and the ability of his officers; for he himſelf was not endowed with the genius of a ſoldier. He wanted that valour, or courage, which is ever ſhewn in the event of common danger, and at every ſeaſon which requires its exertion: but when perſonal ſtrength, or ſkill, was to decide the combat, Shujah-ud-Dowlah had few equals. He rode, without fear, the moſt unruly horſes; he would attack with the ſword, match-lock, or the bow, in the uſe of which weapons he was wonderfully expert, the moſt furious animal of the field. This ſpecies of courage he ſeems to have acquired from his ſkill in the uſe of arms, and in the ſtrength and activity of his body. In ſituations of indiſcriminate danger, as in the day of battle, he is ſaid to have been deficient in the ordinary exertions of fortitude. Though Shujah-ud-Dowlah was the oſtenſible conductor of the Rohilla war, he evinced throughout the campaign a marked puſillanimity; and in the engagement

with

with Hafiz Rhamut, who like a brave ſoldier had occupied the foremoſt rank of the battle, Shujah-ud-Dowlah, ſheltering himſelf in the rear, is accuſed of betraying evident ſigns of fear, which were not wholly effaced, until he ſaw the ſevered head of the Rohilla chief.

LIKE the men of rank in Aſia, he was courteous and affable, had an inſinuating addreſs, and accompliſhed manners. Theſe qualifications, united with a large well-formed perſon, and a handſome countenance, gave him powerful advantages, as well in his intercourſe with foreign agents, as in the adminiſtration of his own government. With a ſoothing flow of language he could calm the moſt outrageous claimants, who though aware of the futility of the language, ſeldom left his preſence but under the impreſſion of a momentary pleaſure. He had acquired an extenſive knowledge in the practice of every ſpecies of deceit, and he could perform with facility every character that was neceſſary to conduct the various purpoſes of deluſion or treachery. Though capable of executing the ſubtileſt ſcheme of intrigue, he was ſubject to occaſional emotions of anger, which have frequently clouded his countenance at ſeaſons when they were hoſtile to his views. In his family, he performed the duties of a mild, indulgent parent, and a kind maſter. When an object of policy called for pecuniary diſtribution, he could laviſh with a liberal hand; but generoſity did not form a fixed part of his diſpoſition: he was equally rapacious in acquiring, as ſordid in preſerving wealth. Shujah-ud-Dowlah's exceſſes

ceſſes in venery, which knew no controul, led him to commit actions derogatory from his ſtation, as well as pernicious to his health; and even when his diſorder had produced an irrecoverable ſtage of diſeaſe, he continued to indulge in a promiſcuous uſe of women. His haram was filled with wives and concubines, to the number, it is ſaid, of eight hundred, from whom were born to him fifty children.—Mirzah Arnany, afterwards entitled Aſoff-ud-Dowlah, was the eldeſt legitimate ſon, and ſucceeded to the entire dominion of Oude without tumult or oppoſition.

CONTINUATION OF THE LETTERS.

LETTER IX.

Bellaſpour, 22d February, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

BEFORE I leave our Indian world, let me, through you, make an acknowledgment for the many cordial marks of friendſhip, and the kind aſſiſtance, I have received, throughout every ſtation in the provinces. The gentlemen of Bengal have been long noted for their hoſpitable conduct to ſtrangers; and in mine own inſtance, I can teſtify that they amply merit the commendation. The reward due to a diſpoſition ſo happily framed, they enjoy to a large extent; they experience thoſe heart-felt pleaſures which ariſe from the exerciſe of humane and liberal offices, and which ever convey an abundant recompence for the inconveniencies ſuſtained in their gratification.—Having diſcharged,

to the beſt of my ability, this indiſpenſable duty, I proceed to give you an account of my journey hither.

On the 8th of February, I left Rampour, and arrived at Moradabad—ten coſſes. This town, ſtanding on the banks of the river Ramgunga, is ſituated in the Vizier's country, which is ſeparated from the diſtricts of Fyze-ullah, a few miles to the north-weſt of it, by the river Ramgunga. Moradabad was once a place of diſtinction; but like many other places which once came under that deſcription in Hindoſtan, is at this day greatly decayed. Having frequently ſeen rupees of the coinage of Moradabad, and thoſe of a very general currency, I apprehend that an extenſive mint has been eſtabliſhed at this place. A hot bath is now amongſt the few remains of its grandeur, in which, with great ceremony, I performed the Mahometan ablutions; being received amongſt my new brethren, as a Moghul officer, employed in the Vizier's ſervice.

Early on the next morning, I left Moradabad, and arrived, under an intenſely hot ſun, at the village of Aumruah—twelve coſſes. On the day of my departure from Rampour, I had a complete view of the lofty range of northern mountains, whoſe ſummits are covered with perpetual ſnows: they extend nearly in a parallel from eaſt to weſt, and form, I ſhould imagine, the northern barrier between Hindoſtan and Thibet. To know the opinion of the people concerning this extraordinary appearance, I enquired of a fellow-traveller, the cauſe of ſo conſpicuous a whiteneſs. He ſaid,

ſaid, that it proceeded from a particular ſort of clay, with which the hills in that quarter were covered. I ſoon perceived that the taſk of explaining the real cauſe would have been equally arduous with an attempt of making him acquainted with the properties of the magnetic needle; ſo, expreſſing my ſurprize at the ſingular quality of the earth, I left him, flattered, no doubt, with the importance of his communication. The moſt ſtriking object to be ſeen at Aumruah, is the body of a notorious robber, which, ſuſpended by the heels from a tree, affords an uſeful ſpectacle of terror. Travelling is by no means attended with danger in this part of India, as may be proved by my example: for in no part of the roads from Benares to this place, though chiefly alone, did I meet with impediment or ill uſage; and I ſhould hold myſelf guilty of an injuſtice, did I not unreſervedly declare, that the inhabitants treated me with civility, and, uſually, with kindneſs.

On the 11th, at Chandpour—12 coſſes. Finding the want of a ſervant ſubjected me to various inconveniences, eſpecially from the diſlike of the Serauce keepers to rub down my horſe, which is I believe, the only ſcruple they entertain, I took into my ſervice an old ſoldier, who by his own ſtory had been engaged in many a fell encounter: nor did his figure belye it, for amongſt the numerous deſperate marks of his profeſſion, he bore one on his face which had wholly excavated the right eye.

On the 11th, at the village of Burroo—twelve coſſes. This place affords no public accommodation for paſſengers: but the

pompous

pompous language of the old warrior, who entitled me a Moghul officer of the Vizier's, going to join the army then forming againſt the Sicques, procured a hoſpitable reception; nor did he fail to reap the advantage of our borrowed character.

On the 12th, at Najebabad—eleven coſſes. Najeb-ud-Dowlah,* who built this town, ſaw that its ſituation would facilitate the commerce of Kaſhmire, which having been diverted from its former channel of Lahore and Dehli, by the inroads of the Sicques, Mahrattas, and Afghans, took a courſe through the mountains at the head of the Punjab, and was introduced into the Rohilla country through the Lall Dong paſs. This inducement, with the deſire of eſtabliſhing a mart for the Hindoos of the adjacent mountains, probably influenced the choice of this ſpot; which otherwiſe is not favorable for the ſite of a capital town, being low, and ſurrounded with ſwampy grounds. About a year after the death of this chief, the fort of Najeb Ghur, which is contiguous to the town, was attacked by the Mahrattas, who had compelled Shah Alum, the reigning emperor, to accompany their army. The garriſon made a good defence, and would not, it is ſaid, have ſurrendered, had Zabitah Khan, the ſon of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, then lying in the neighbourhood with a reſpectable force, moved to its aſſiſtance. But without offering to face the enemy, or throw any relief into the fort, he croſſed the Ganges, and ſought ſhelter in Ghous Ghur.

* The chief who has been already mentioned in the Rohilla tract.

Since

Since that period, or rather since the death of its founder, Najebabad has fallen from its former importance, and seems now chiefly upheld by the languishing trade of Kashmire.

A SMALL karavanserah, the only one in the place, being occupied, I thought myself fortunate in getting admittance into a cook's shop, where kabaubs * and stewed beef were dressed in savoury taste, and all the news-mongers, idlers, politicians, and disbanded soldiers, of the quarter, resort. Whilst I was eating my mess, a boy came in and asked, if any travellers were going to Jumbo or Kashmire, as the kafilah † would depart on the next day. On enquiring particularly into the state of this intelligence, I learned, that about one hundred mules, laden with raw silk, and cotton cloths, and ordinary callicoes, for the Jumbo ‡ market, had already moved to the skirts of the town. Having been furnished with a letter to a banker at Najeb Ghur, who has the general charge of dispatching kafilahs, I was introduced by him to the merchants, who received me without hesitation. When interrogated on the score of my business, I described myself as a Turk, going to Kashmire to purchase shauls. The Turkish language being in these parts wholly unknown, and as traders of various nations often carry into Kashmire bills, or specie only, my story

* Meat minced and dressed in the manner of what culinary language calls, *forced-meat balls*; but *kabaub*, in a general sense, is any roasted food.

† Karavan.—*Kafilah* is the term peculiar to India and Persia.

‡ A town situate about 200 miles to the S. E. of Kashmire.

obtained

obtained a general credit. After a mature conſideration of the perſonal qualities of my ſervant, which, poor fellow, had been much impaired by time and adverſe fortune, they were condemned as altogether unfit for the ſervice that lay before us; and one of the paſſengers ill-naturedly obſerved, that a man ſhould have all his eyes about him who attempted to penetrate into Kaſhmire. To fill up this vacancy, (for dreading the difficulties of the journey, he himſelf expreſſed a reluctance to proceed), I had the good fortune to obtain a Kaſhmirian, who was at all points qualified for my purpoſe. He had travelled through a great part of India and Afghaniſtan, and I ſoon diſcovered, that together with an infinite reſource in every embarraſſment, he poſſeſſed a fund of curious hiſtory, which he did not fail to embelliſh with a large ſhare of humour and vanity. But I will ſum up his eulogy, and at once tell you that he was, take him for all in all, one of the beſt ſervants I had ever known; and could I have acquired the art of qualifying a rather too redundant ſhare of acidity and warmth of diſpoſition, he would have proved a treaſure to me. Being well verſed in all the ſcheme of an Indian journey, he made the neceſſary preparations, and took on him every trouble; ſo I could now freely indulge my pleaſures, which centred chiefly in hearing and telling ſtories, and ſmoaking my pipe.

On the 14th, at Ramnaghur — nine coſſes. This village is in ruins, but having a large well of water, it is uſually made the firſt northern halting place from Vajzibabad.

On

On the 15th, at Lall Dong—eight coſſes. The ſtation where Fyze-ullah, as has been noticed, took poſt after the Rohilla battle.—Lall Dong is the northern limit of this ſide of the Vizier's territory, which is ſeparated from Siringnaghur by a rivulet. A detention at this place for the adjuſtment of ſome kafilah accounts, gives me an opportunity of drawing a ſketch of the ſurrounding objects, and the œconomy of a karavan.

The country from Najeb Ghur to this frontier is chiefly a waſte, over-run with low wood, and is ill ſupplied with water, there being none in the ſpace from Ramnaghur to the neighbourhood of Lall Dong. The inhabitants ſay, that in the time of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, the land now overgrown with wood, was a cultivated plain; but ſuch is the precarious ſtate of the native territories of Hindoſtan, from the inert diſpoſition which, with little deviation, pervades the body of the people, that its welfare muſt largely depend on the ability and executive talents of one man; and a ſucceſſion of able rulers, being a rare event in the hiſtory of nations, we are not to wonder at the ruinous ſtate into which many of the moſt valuable provinces of Hindoſtan have fallen. But on the other hand, the efforts of an active prince, are ever followed by rapid ſucceſs. Habitations are at a moderate expence ſpeedily erected, and the implements of agriculture are of ſo ſimple and eaſy a conſtruction, that moſt huſbandmen, with a very ſmall help of an artificer, can make their own machines.

The greateſt extent of plain, and that was limited, lying on

the north ſide of the rivulet, the kafilah encamped on the Siringnaghur quarter, where we were all ſeen buſily engaged in preparing for the enſuing journey of three days, which lay through a foreſt. The weather during the day, growing now extremely hot, it was neceſſary to provide ſome covering in ſubſtitute of a tent. I therefore made a purchaſe of a large black kummul, or blanket, which being ſlantingly extended over a ſlight bamboo frame, compoſed of a ridge pole upheld by two ſupporters, and faſtened below by ſmall pins, formed a commodious and portable lodging. My baggage, correſponding with the ſtrength of my horſe, was compoſed of a thin mattraſs, a quilt, a canvas portmanteau, containing a few ſhifts of linen, which ſupplied alſo the place of a pillow, and the aforementioned kummul. Theſe neceſſaries, with an oil bag carried by the Kaſhmirian, afforded a ſufficient accommodation; nor ſhould any perſon travelling in my manner, have more equipage. A larger will raiſe unfavorable conjectures, and ſubject him to frequent inveſtigation, delay, and taxes.

On the 22d, the kafilah moved, and penetrating ſix coſſes, through the mountains, by a north-weſt courſe, halted for the benefit of its water, near a ſmall ſtream. In this day's journey, I had many occaſions of ſeeing that our mules* were ſtrong and ſure-footed. It was wonderful to obſerve the eaſe and dexterity with which theſe animals, heavily laden, clambered up ſteep and

* They are brought into the northern parts of India, from Aſghaniſtan.

rugged

rugged paths. The proprietors of the goods, chiefly reſidents of Benares, Lucknow, and Furruckabad, had appointed agents to accompany the kaſilah, who are not the ultimate venders of the merchandize, but contract to deliver it, and pay the different duties at ſome deſtined mart. To ſhelter the packages from the inclemency of the weather, a ſmall complement of tents is provided, as it rarely happens that a kafilah halts at any inhabited place. A plentiful ſupply of water, and a plain for the accommodation of the cattle, is all that is ſought for. The carriers ſay alſo, that a plain more effectually ſecures them againſt theft.

On the 23d, proceeded 9 coſſes further into the foreſt, and halted near a large water courſe. This day an occurrence happened which involved me in a ſerious difficulty. The intenſe heat of the weather, and the fatigue of walking over a tract of deep ſand, induced me, after paſſing it, to indulge in my pipe. During this regale, which I enjoyed under the ſhade of a tree, the kafilah had gone out of ſight. The ground in front being thickly covered with leaves, no appearance of a road was diſcernible; and my horſe, when I mounted, was ſo much alarmed, that he would not, but with great reluctance, move in any direction. Whether the animal, from any inſtinctive power, perceived the embarraſſment of our ſituation, or that its organs of ſmell were ſenſible of the effluvia which is emitted from the body of moſt wild beaſts, I will not preſume to determine: though I was induced to aſcribe its agitation to the firſt cauſe, having been once placed in a ſimilar

ſituation, with the difference, that no animals of prey, or of the large ſize, were in the neighbourhood. After traverſing the foreſt in various directions without perceiving the appearance of tract or habitation, or the veſtige of any creature, except great quantities of elephants dung, I, at length, fell into a narrow path, which leading through a long ſpace of woody deſart, brought me to a village; whence the people with much kindneſs conducted me to our halting place.

ON the 24th, at Jumah, a few ſcattered houſes—four coſſes. This hamlet lies within a mile of the Ganges, which, there, has nearly a ſouthern courſe, and is about two hundred yards broad; with a depth of water from ten to fifteen feet. About half a mile below the place of paſſage, is a bed of rocks, extending from the eaſt ſide more than half way acroſs the river, on which the ſtream breaks with ſome force. The Ganges doth not here, as in your more happy land, roll its tide through a country ſpread with fertile plains and populous villages, whoſe inhabitants live in peace and plenty. Here, a thick gloomy foreſt, tenanted only by the beaſts of the field, ſkirts it on the eaſtern ſide; and on the other, an uncultivated flat, over-run with low wood.

ON the 25th, croſſed the river at the ferry of Nackerghaut, which is about twelve miles above Hurdwar; the kafilah being to remain ſome days at Jumah, I quitted it, and, accompanied by the Kaſhmirians, I joined a ſmall party of merchants carrying cotton to the town of Nhan. The officer ſtationed on the weſtern

ſide

ſide of the Ganges for the collection of cuſtoms, laid me under a contribution of two rupees; alledging, that as I ſeemed to travel much at my eaſe, I muſt be well enabled to pay that ſum. It was to little purpoſe urging that I did not poſſeſs any property on which duties could be collected, or the juſtice of levying a tax on a traveller. My argument was held wholly inadmiſſible, and that of the cuſtom-houſe officer being ſupported by a party of match lock men, I gave up, with decent reſignation, the unequal conteſt. When the long roll of galling taxes impoſed on other nations, eſteemed more enlightened and humane than the mountaineers of Siringnaghur, is conſidered, we ſhall probably not judge the meaſure rigorous, which obliges thoſe riding at their eaſe to contribute to the relief of a ſtate that affords a ſafeguard to their perſons by its ſalutary government.

On the 26th, arrived at the village of Khalſawala — ſeven coſſes. The kafilah halted this day on a pleaſant green plain adjoining to the village, and ſkirted by a wood, through which a tranſparent ſtream flowed in many a winding channel. From its alluring appearance, though the weather was cold, I was induced to bathe; and to prevent interruption, I ſtrayed into the thickeſt part of the wood, which I found abounding in peacocks, and a variety of other birds, one of which reſembled the common fowl, but of a ſmaller ſize, and of very active flight.

On the 28th, at Dayrah, the reſidence of the deputy of the Siringnaghur rajah. This ſmall town, which is populous and neatly

neatly built, may be called the capital of the lower diviſion * of Siringnaghur, which includes a ſpace of level country lying between a chain of ſcattered hills on the ſouth, and the larger range of northern mountains. The Sicques have an unreſtrained acceſs into theſe parts through the ſouthern hills, which are broken by ſmall valleys; and, fearing no oppoſition from Zabitah Khan, they can at pleaſure penetrate into the lower diſtricts of Siringnaghur. The chief reſides at a town bearing the common name of the territory, which lyes, I am informed, about one hundred miles to the north, and by the eaſt of Lall Dong. The inactivity of the preſent rajah has enabled the Sicques to exact from this country a regular tribute.† Of what ſuperior courage and reſource was that chief of Siringnaghur, who, in defiance of Aurungzebe, the moſt powerful prince of his time, protected the ſon ‡ of Dara, brother of the emperor, and his deadly foe, regardleſs of every menace. But he fell to the *ſacra fames auri*, the moſt deſtructive evil, my friend, which Pandora's box let looſe upon the ſons of man. It hath often armed the ſon againſt the father, hath ſown diſſention in the marriage bed, and broken the tye of honour, and the bonds of friendſhip.

To adjuſt the account of the Siringnaghur cuſtoms, the kafilah halted until the 15th, when we proceeded to Kheynſapoor —

* It is called the *done*, or low country.

† Said to be four thouſand rupees annually.

‡ See Bernier's account of Sipahi Sheko's retreat into Siringnaghur.

ten

ten coſſes. At this place, I ſaw two Sicque horſemen, who had been ſent from their country to receive the Siringaghur tribute, which is collected from the revenue of certain cuſtom-houſes. From the manner in which theſe men were treated, or rather treated themſelves, I frequently wiſhed for the power of migrating into the body of a Sicque for a few weeks—ſo well did theſe cavaliers fare. No ſooner had they alighted than beds were provided for their repoſe, and their horſes were ſupplied with green barley pulled out of the field. The kafilah travellers were contented to lodge on the ground, and expreſſed their thanks for permiſſion to purchaſe what they required;—ſuch is the difference between thoſe who were in, and thoſe who were out of power.

On the 6th of March croſſed the Jumna, and halted on the weſtern banks—eight coſſes. It flows with a clear ſtream to the ſouth-eaſt, and has about the ſame breadth with the Ganges.* Fiſh abound in this part of the Jumna, as I myſelf ſaw; but I believe the adjacent inhabitants do not uſe any means of catching them. No cultivation is ſeen in the vicinity of the Jumna, though a ſpacious plain extends on the weſtern ſide, and might be watered without much difficulty from the river. The Siringnaghur territory, which here terminates, is bounded on the north and the north-eaſt, by the diſtricts of independent Hindoo Rahahs;

* It is to be noticed, that I croſſed theſe rivers at the ſeaſon of their loweſt ebb.

on

on the ſouth; by Oude; on the weſt and north-weſt, by the Jumna; and, the ſouth-weſt, by the dominions of the Sicques. From Lall Dong to the Ganges, the country forms with little interruption a continued chain of woody hills. The elephant, which abounds in theſe foreſts, but of a ſize and quality inferior to that found in the Chittagong and Malay quarters, is here only valued for its ivory. From the Ganges to the Jumna, the road lies through an extenſive valley, of a good ſoil, but thinly inhabited, and interſperſed with wood. The food of the people is wheaten bread and peaſe, the latter being uſually made into a ſoup; and, believe me, that in the courſe of my life I never eat a meal with a higher reliſh. Vigorous health, indeed, daily labour, and a clear air, will recommend to the appetite worſe things than wheaten cakes and peaſe-ſoup. The attempt to aſcertain the revenue of a country in which I have been ſo curſory a ſojourner, would be preſumptuous. I will therefore generally ſay, that Siringnaghur is computed to give an annual produce of about twenty lacks of rupees. The officer on the weſtern ſide of the Jumna, taxed me in the ſum of two rupees; alledging, that being merely a paſſenger, and unconnected with any traffic from which an advantage would ariſe to the country, that I was taxable in myſelf. The ſame argument being held as at the Siringnaghur paſs, and eſteeming myſelf fortunate at falling under no minuter notice, I paid the fine with pleaſure.

On the 7th, at Karidah — eight coſſes: and on the 8th, at

Coleroon

Coleroon — ſeven coſſes, — hamlets of a few houſes. Here two Kaſhmirians, a Sunaſſee,* myſelf and ſervant, quitted the kafilah, and on the 9th, arrived at Nhan — eight coſſes; the reſidence of the chief of a territory of the ſame name; and who on the day of our arrival, made a public entry into the town after a long abſence. A diviſion of the Nhan country extends to the ſouthward of the head of the Punjab, and bordering the country of the Sicques, they agreeably to a conduct obſerved with all their weaker neighbours, took poſſeſſion of it. The Rajah armed himſelf to recover the diſtricts in queſtion, but after a deſultory warfare in which he acquired much military credit, he was obliged to ſue for peace; nor were the conquered lands reſtored until he conſented to remit a tribute of two thouſand rupees to a certain Sicque chief. This ſum you will doubtleſs deem trifling, and it is ſo in your country, where ſpecie is plenty, and the mode of living conformably luxurious and extravagant. But amongſt theſe mountaineers, whoſe manners are rude and ſimple, who ſeek for little elſe than the neceſſaries of life, which are produced to them in great abundance, this amount is important, and to collect it, requires even oppreſſive exertion.

The inhabitants, and the foreign merchants of the town, were laid under a ſevere contribution for the maintenance of this war;

* The name of a Hindoo tribe, chiefly compoſed of mendicants; though I have ſeen a Sunaſſee conducting an extenſive commerce.

and the chief having now discovered the weight which the people can bear, it is probable that he will continue to reap the benefit of the impost, though the cause is removed. The Rajah of Nhan made an entry into his capital, not as Alexander entered Babylon, but with some dozen horsemen, sorrily clad, and very slenderly mounted. Had they indeed been better equipped, both themselves and horses would have shewn to little advantage, after clambering up at least six miles of a steep mountain, on the summit of which the small, though neat, town of Nhan stands. This chief, a handsome young man, of a bright olive complexion, and taller than the middle size, was dressed in a vest of yellow silk, and a red turban; and he was armed with a sabre, a bow, and a quiver of arrows. Though he has made them groan with exactions, he is a great favourite of the people. But he is young and brave, and he liberally disburses what he extorts. The joy invariably expressed by the crouds who came to congratulate his safe return, gave me a sensible pleasure. They saluted him without noise or tumult, by an inclination of the body, and touching the head with the right hand; hailing him at the same time their father and protector. The chief, whilst passing, spoke to them in terms affectionate and interesting, which, like a stroke of magick, seemed in an instant to erase every trace of grievance. Such were the advantages which pleasing manners and a liberality of temper, joined to the other alluring qualities of a soldier, gave to this prince; and will, unfortunately for their subjects, give to every prince of similar endowments

endowments on the face of the earth. Would it not be more productive of the welfare of mankind, that inſtead of theſe eminent virtues, a deſpotic ruler poſſeſſed a diſpoſition thoroughly impregnated with vice; that with his tyranny, he united cowardice and envy, avarice and arrogance? The ſubjects of ſuch a prince, would be the ſooner impelled to break the diſgraceful yoke, and by a ſucceſsful example, promote the general cauſe of civil liberty.

A SPECIES of faſcination I find has now caught me, and I cannot quit the ground without introducing on it, which I do with a profound reverence for his memory, and entreating forgiveneſs of his ſhade for claſſing him in ſuch company, the illuſtrious Julius Cæſar, who may be quoted to confirm the truth of the foregoing poſition. Cato's ſuppoſed reflection on the character of this hero, concludes with imprecating his virtues, for they had ruined his country. No fact of ancient or modern hiſtory, has, perhaps, given more literary pleaſure, than the life of Cæſar; nor perhaps is any record of the ancient annals better authenticated. Had that great man reſtored with peace, the liberty of his country; had Cæſar cheriſhed the fire of the Roman ſenate, he would have had no parallel on earth. Yet, "if Cæſar did wrong, he ſuf-"fered grievouſly for it."—An exemplary humanity, of rare growth in his day, was the native virtue of Cæſar, and is ever the genuine attendant of a great ſoul. The humane exerciſe of power throws even a luſtre on characters that elſe would deſerve our reproach; but it adorns the ſoldier with unſullied radiancy, and

imparts to his laurels a bloom, which otherwiſe are viewed with horror, and exhibit only a badge of cruelty and rapine.

On the 12th, at noon, I left Nhan, and that evening halting at the village of Saleannah, ſituate at the bottom of the hill, and four coſſes diſtant from the town. In this quarter I firſt ſaw, ſince I left Europe, the fir tree,* and the willow, which, as in our country, delights in hanging over a ſtream. From the top of the Nhan hill, the plains of Sirhend preſent a wide proſpect to the ſouth-eaſt, ſouth, and ſouth-weſt: the view to the northward is terminated at a ſhort diſtance by ſnowy mountains. Little danger being now incurred from travelling in ſmall bodies, as the mountains compoſe a barrier againſt the depredations of the Sicques or other marauders, our party from this place to Bellaſpour was ſmall. To aſſiſt my ſervant I had entertained a Kaſhmirian trader in ſmall wares, who accompanied me from Najeh Ghur; and he was at all times a uſeful and a pleaſant companion.

On the 13th. at Sudowra — twelve coſſes; a village on a high hill of ſteep aſcent. The road this day led through a woody and mountainous country, abounding, we were told, with a variety of wild beaſts. A tyger had newly marked our path with the impreſſion of his feet, and being then informed that this creature always attacks animals in preference to men, I immediately diſmounted, and led my poor little horſe. The tyger, and I believe

* That ſpecies of it called the Scots fir.

generally,

generally, the feline ſpecies, poſſeſs but a ſmall ſhare of courage, and ſeldom openly ſeizes its prey; but, lurking in concealment, attacks by ſurpriſe, and if unſucceſsful ſteals away into a hiding place without returning to the onſet; and, in contradiſtinction to the canine ſpecies, whoſe great ſtrength lies in the jaw, the feline ſtrike their prey with the fore feet and talons. It is ſaid that a tyger having once taſted human fleſh, becomes fond of it, and gratifies his appetite when it can be done without encountering any conſpicuous danger. Yet, it would appear, that all animals have a dread of man, which proceeding from the novelty of his appearance, or perhaps ſome inſtinctive fear of his powers of offence, prompts them, when not furious with hunger, to ſhun the conteſt. — This evening, I was comfortably lodged in the front of a Hindoo retail ſhop, where an excellent meſs of peaſe and wheaten cakes was ſerved up to us. Pray excuſe me for noting this domeſtic concern, which is to me of great moment; for by ſuch wholeſome meals, my ſtrength was unimpaired, and my daily progreſs made with vigour. Covered quarters during the night was what we anxiouſly ſought after, but did not always obtain. The Hindoos, though hoſpitably diſpoſed to travellers, are averſe to admitting Mahometans, whom they hold unclean, into any part of their houſes.

On the 14th, at Lawalan — ſix coſſes; — a few ſcattered houſes. This day's journey conſiſted in climbing ſteep mountains, and though my little horſe was as active as a goat, I was obliged,

obliged, from the almoſt perpendicular height, to walk the greateſt part of the way. For the benefit of ſuch travellers who may come within your knowledge, and be diſpoſed to purſue my track, you muſt inform them that the ſhop-keeper at Lawaſah is a great rogue, a noiſy wrangler, and mixes a great quantity of barley with his wheat-meal. As he is the only man of his profeſſion in the place, there is no remedy for the evil but laying in a ſtock at Sudowra, where they will find honeſt treatment, and lodging to boot. Though it is not very probable that this recommendation will be of material uſe to the honeſt man at Sudowra, yet I feel a pleaſure in mentioning his goodneſs to me.

On the 15th at Coultie — nine coſſes; — two or three ſcattered houſes. The Nhan country is bounded here by the ſmall diſtrict of Bojepour, which depends on the Bellaſpour chief. — On the 16th, halted on the bank of a nulla — ſeven coſſes. Met on the road a Kaſhmirian family, conſiſting of a goldſmith, his wife, and ſome children, who were travelling to ſome town on the borders of Thibet, where they intended to ſettle.

On the 17th, at Kunda, a ſmall village — eight coſſes, and about five miles to the north-weſt of Durmpour, the reſidence of the chief of a ſmall diſtrict, generally ſubject to the authority of the Bellaſpour government. At Durmpour I paid a duty of two rupees for paſſing my horſe

On the 13th, at Gowrah — nine coſſes. I halted during the heat of the day near a water mill, the firſt I had ſeen in India.

It was

It was conſtructed on the principle of the like machine in Europe, but of more ſimple mechaniſm and coarſer workmanſhip. About two o'clock in the morning, I obſerved an eclipſe of the moon, the body of which continued partially ſhaded for near two hours. In the evening, our little party went to a farmer's cottage, where we ſolicited permiſſion to lodge our baggage, and to ſleep under one of his ſheds. The farmer candidly ſaid, looking ſtedfaſtly in my face, which he ſeemed not to like, that he was apprehenſive that an out-ſide lodging would not ſatisfy us. It was with much difficulty he would believe that we had ſought his houſe only for ſhelter, and it was not until the Kaſhmirian had ſhewn him ſome ſmall wares for ſale, that we were ſuffered to occupy the front of his houſe. The diſtricts of Hundah and Gowrah, are denominated the Barrah Tukrah.* being certain portions of territory bequeathed by a chief of Bellaſpour to his younger ſon, ſome fifty years ago. Theſe petty ſtates are ill governed; and it is only among them that the traveller, from the Ganges to Kaſhmire, incurs the riſk of being pillaged.

On the 19th, at the Village of Tayanaghur — ten coſſes. On the 20th, at Bellaſpour — twelve coſſes, the reſidence of the Ranee or female ruler of the Kalour territory. This town ſtands on the ſouth-eaſt ſide of the Setloud or Sutludge, the moſt eaſterly of the five rivers, from which the name of Punjah † is given to the tract of

* A term in the Hinduee, ſignifying twelve portions.
† A Perſian word, ſignifying five waters.

country

country extending from Sirhend to the Indus. The Setloud, a very rapid ſtream, is at this place about one hundred yards broad. Bellaſpour is a well built town, and exhibits a regularity not often ſeen in theſe parts. The ſtreets are paved, though rather roughly; and the houſes, conſtructed of ſtone and mortar, have a neat appearance. Kalour is bounded to the northward by the Kangrah diſtricts; to the eaſtward by a large tract of country called Buſſeer; to the ſouthward by Nhan; and to the weſtward by the Punjab; and its revenue is ſaid to amount to twelve lacks of rupees. On my arrival at Bellaſpour, I found the Ranee engaged in a war with the chief of Kangrah, on the limits of whoſe country her army was then encamped. It may not edify or perhaps entertain you to know the cauſe of this fell diſpute, which however had taken ſuch poſſeſſion of the minds of the mountaineers, and to them was ſo important an event, that they ſeemed to think the hills and foreſts of Bellaſpour the ſeat of univerſal war. The ſiege of Troy, and the conflicts on the Scamander, would have appeared as mere ſkirmiſhes to theſe ſylvan heroes; and they probably would have allowed no other degree of compariſon, than that women were the cauſe of them both. But as I myſelf became involuntarily intereſted in their ſtory, and having little other matter to communicate, I am induced to intrude a ſketch of it on your patience,

To deduce this eventful matter *ab ovo*, I muſt call your attention to the Days of Acbar, who is ſaid to have been the firſt Mahometan

metan prince who reduced the northern mountains of Hindoſtan to the obedience of the empire. Towards the northern limit of Kalour, is a ſtrong hold on an eminence, called the Kote Kangrah, the reduction of which detained Acbar, who commanded the expedition in perſon, a whole year, according to the tradition of this quarter. To reward one of his officers who had ſignalized himſelf in this ſervice, he beſtowed on him the captured fort, with a conſiderable ſpace of adjacent territory. The deſcendants of this chief who are of the Sheah's ſect of Mahometans, continued in the poſſeſſion until the preſent period, when the Rajah of Kangrah, on ſome pretence, laid the diſtricts waſte, and beſieged the fort. Unable himſelf to repel the Enemy, the Mahometan ſolicited the aid of the Bellaſpour Ranee, who with the ſpirit of a heroine, afforded ſpeedy and vigorous ſuccour to her neighbour, whoſe cauſe ſhe has already revenged by plundering and deſtroying almoſt every village of Kangrah; the chief of which now vainly aſſerts, that the Ranee, ſeeing his country deſtitute of defence, ſeized, under the colour of aſſiſting her ally, the occaſion of augmenting her own power.

Halted on the 21ſt and 22d, at Bellaſpour. Theſe wars did not a little derange our meaſure of progreſs, eſpecially as there was attached to the Kangrah army, through which we muſt neceſſarily paſs, a body of Sicques, who had impreſſed, with a lively terror, even this ſequeſtered region. The two Kaſhmirians, now

my only aſſociates, were averſe to any motion until we ſhould be reinforced. After much entreaty they conſented to accompany me to the Bellaſpour camp, where the probability of meeting paſſengers going to the northward, they were obliged to confeſs, was greater than in the town. But to a rooted indolence, the common want of enterprize preſides over all the actions of an Indian; and here let me obſerve, that our pincipal ſuperiority over them, will largely conſiſt in attacking this weak ſide. The prompt deciſion of our councils, the vigour of action, muſt in every conteſt with them command ſucceſs. This conſtitutional inactivity and languor of the mind, have been farther promoted by the creed of predeſtination, and aſtrology. A minute attention is ſhewn by the natives of India to certain days, hours, and minutes. On the commencement of any ſervice, or in the performance of even the ordinary duties of life, their conduct is regulated by the immediate period: and ſhould the calculator diſcover a reluctancy, or deſire of delay in his employer, or apprehend that his own reputation might ſuffer in the event, he uſually lays a bar on the undertaking. Over ſuch men what advantage do we not poſſeſs? Yet in ſome of the late military tranſactions of India, we have weakened our claim to thoſe natural and acquired powers, which Engliſh ſoldiers in moſt of their actions have diſplayed in this country. Do not miſconſtrue the tendency of this digreſſion, and mark me as an abettor of the incurſions and depredations which we are occaſionally

uſed

uſed to make on the lands of our neighbours. Our conduct to one * of them has been as unjuſt as it was unwiſe, nor do I know whether to attribute the favourable concluſion of the event † to good fortune, or to the folly of our enemies.

On the evening of the 23d, croſſed in a ferry-boat, the Setloud, a narrow deep and rapid river, full of windings, and halted at a ſmall village oppoſite to Bellaſpour, though the diſtance from the ferry was nearly two miles from the town. A Tumboo-ſhall kafilah had encamped on the north ſide of the town on its way to Dehli and Lucknow, with the proprietors of which, or rather their agents, I formed an acquaintance; and through their influence with the collector of the cuſtoms I was permitted to paſs without obſtacle. This aſſiſtance was the more opportune, as the Bellaſpour government is deemed jealous and oppreſſive. The collector extended his favour even to a length that I had not expected, for he not only expedited my paſſage through the Bellaſpour diſtricts, but gave me a recommendatory letter to his brother, who was the manager of the Kangrah cuſtom houſe. The people of the Tumboo kafilah were deſirous of knowing my ſtory, and you alſo, perhaps, would wiſh to be informed of the preſent one, certain parts of which, on hearing that the Turkiſh language was ſpoken by a perſon of the party, I compiled for the uſe of the day. God only

* The Mahrattas

† The convention of Wargaum, which covered us with diſgrace.

knows, my friend, what a varied multiplicity of fictions I have formed in the courſe of this journey: and I have to ſupplicate his pardon for the fabrication, as well as to hope for your acquieſcence in the neceſſity. The tenor of my ſtory ſets forth, that I was by birth a Turk, and had come when young to India, where I was taken into the houſe of a perſon of diſtinction who had brought me up. That from my long reſidence in India I had forgotten my native language, and that my profeſſion had been chiefly that of a ſoldier, which quitting on a diſguſt, I had collected my little property and become a travelling merchant. The ſtory, not very complex, poſſeſſed plauſibility ſufficient to procure common belief, and I myſelf had entered ſo warmly into its ſpirit, that I began to believe it. I muſt here inform you, that having been ſeen two or three times writing on the road, I was told by one of the paſſengers that it was an European cuſtom, and a very uſeleſs one. The remark alarmed me, but I told him without much heſitation, that I had been always accuſtomed to write my current expences, that at the end of the year I might aſcertain the amount, and not exceed my income. My remarks were uſually noted in a rude Perſian character, but whilſt I was writing an Engliſh letter from this place, a Kaſhmirian who was ſitting near me, and who had formerly ſerved on board one of our country ſhips, obſerved, that I wrote from the left to the right in the European manner: but on being told that the Turks uſed the ſame method, he ſeemed ſatisfied. From an inattention to one of the forms of my new cha-

racter,

racter, inſtead of ſitting down, as the Aſiatics invariably do in the performance of urinal evacuation, I uſed occaſionally to ſtand upright; and being ſeverely reprehended for this uncleanlineſs, I alledged that the habit was not uncommon amongſt ſoldiers, who from the hurry of ſervice, and their diſſipated courſe of life, make many deviations from the rules of decorum. But the want of penetration, or the good humour in which we lived together, has prevented my companions from ſeeing through my diſguiſe, which I now entertain ſanguine hopes of preſerving to the end of my journey.

I am, dear Sir,

Your's, &c. &c.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Nourpour, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

ON the 22d of laſt month, I had the pleaſure of deſcribing to you my journey from Lall Dong to Bellaſpour, and I can now with pleaſure ſay, that unhurt by the Sicques, tygers, or thieves, I am ſafely lodged in Nourpour, the principal town of a diſtrict of the ſame name. From the weſtern bank of the Setloud, we proceeded on the 24th of March to the village of Comour Hattee, eight coſſes. An Hattee, which in the language of this country ſignifies retail ſhop, affords the beſt accommodation for a traveller, and I always endeavoured to make one my halting place. There I procured wheat, wheat-meal, peaſe, and ghee,* of which my common fare is compoſed, and by the applying in civil terms, the ſhop keeper commonly indulged me with the uſe of the front part of his ſhop.

ON the 25th, in the Bellaſpour army—ten coſſes. It will not demand the pen of Homer to deſcribe the different powers which

* Butter boiled, in which ſtate it is always uſed for culinary purpoſes in India.

formed

formed this camp; their ſtrength, the names and characters of their leaders, or the ſituation of the ground which they occupied; ſuffice it to ſay, that about 300 horſes, and 8000 foot-men, armed with match-locks, ſwords, ſpears, and clubs, were huddled together on two ſides of a hill, in a deep ſtate of confuſion and filth. Having reſided for the ſpace of four months in this ſpot under ſmall ſheds made of the boughs of trees, you will naturally ſuppoſe, that the effects reſulting from the ſituation could neither have been pleaſant or ſalutary. In all, were four very ordinary tents, one of which was occupied by the generaliſſimo, a brother, and I believe an elder one, of the late chief of Bellaſpour; for the order of ſucceſſion in the line of primogeniture, is not at this day ſtrictly adhered to in India, either amongſt the Hindoos, or Mahometans. This perſonage, from age, being incapable of performing any active duty, had appointed a younger brother to the executive command. The Ranee, with her ſon, a youth of about ten years of age, and a favourite Sunnaſſee, had retired during the war to an adjacent fort, where ſhe directed the general operation of the war. Having entered thus far into the hiſtory of Bellaſpour, I will proceed to explain ſome parts of the ſtory of this lady, which as they tend to place female conduct in a diſtinguiſhed point of view, I embrace the occaſion with pleaſure. And here permit me to declare with a fervent ſincerity, and an honourable ſenſe of the dignity of character to which I aſpire, that I am a zealous friend of women, and that as far as the offering of my mite will contribute to their aid, or to

a diſplay

a diſplay of their various merit, it ſhall be held forth with a willing hand.

QUITTING theſe encomiums on myſelf rather than on the ſex, I am to inform you that the Bellaſpour Ranee, on the death of the late chief, which happened about three or four year ago, declared herſelf the guardian of her ſon, and regent of the country. She was oppoſed in this purpoſe by her huſband's brother, the perſon who now commands the army; and ſhe had alſo to combat the many difficulties incident in this country to her ſex, the moſt embarraſſing of which was a preclusion from public appearance; yet baffling every attempt made to ſubvert her authority, ſhe firmly eſtabliſhed herſelf in the government.* The event of the Ranee's ſucceſs, brought on the confinement of her competitor; but after a ſhort time, during which he experienced a lenient treatment, he was releaſed. This dame of ſpirit, who hath evinced ſtrong traits of a diſpoſition fitted for conducting either military or civil ſchemes and who hath hitherto been fortunate in them, is at this day enthralled by the force of love. Whether this paſſion is to be claſſed amongſt the alloys of our virtues, according to the doctrine of the moſt rigid moraliſts, or whether it heightens the luſtre of thoſe

* It has already been obſerved in the letter on Hindoo mythology, that amongſt the Hindoos a woman on the demiſe of the huſband becomes an inefficient member in the family, but in the preſent day this ordinance is often over-ruled by the intervention of power, wealth, or intrigue. In this note it may not be improper to mention, that the Hindoos uſe the epithet, "widowed," as deſcriptive of futility, or of any contemptible and nugatory act.

already poſſeſſed, and even creates good qualities in us, as the elegant Yorick has advanced, are queſtions ſubmitted, with a due deference to the intricacy of the ſubject, to thoſe who are ſkilled in the extenſive paſſion of love. The object of this lady's favour I ſaw, and the choice ſhe has made is a proof of good taſte. He is a young handſome Hindoo, of a religious tribe, who, contrary to the uſage of his ſect, which is founded on rules almoſt as ſevere as thoſe of the Carthuſians, dreſſes gayly, and in the Mahometan faſhion. From a certain levity, though politeneſs of manners, ſet off by the delicate fancy of his apparel, you at the firſt glance pronounce him a favourite of the women. Such are the changes which love can produce, even amongſt a people who obſerve their religious ordinances with a ſcrupulouſneſs irreconcileable to common ſenſe, and which in ſome inſtances border on groſs abſurdity.* Thus much for the Ranee of Bellaſpour, to whom be all ſucceſs!

I now learned that my progreſs towards the Kangrah army, would without the protection of an eſcort, be attended with much riſk. In order to procure ſo eſſential an accommodation I waited on the commander in chief, then ſitting under a banian tree, and attended by his principal officers, the greater part of them clad in native buff. Some new levies were paſſing in review before him, that had come in from the country, or rather the woods;

* In the neighbourhood of Benares is a ſect of religious Hindoos, who it is ſaid forbear making any uſe of their hands, even on the moſt neceſſary occaſions; but are fed and aſſiſted by others.

for

for they bore a ſtrong reſemblance to the deſcription given in heathen ſtory of the ſatyrs, fawns, and other branches of the ſylvan race; nor do I think that all the powers of a Pruſſian drill ſerjeant, extenſive as they are, could have impreſſed on them a competent knowledge of military diſcipline. On approaching the chief, I made him an offering of a rupee, laid on the corner of my veſt. You will be pleaſed to notice, that the piece of money is, not to be placed on the naked hand, but on a handkerchief, or ſome part of the garment held out for that purpoſe; and though the ſuperior ſhall be diſpoſed to favour the client, yet from motives of generoſity, or an attention to his condition, it often happens, that he does not take the offering, but touches it with his finger. The honour is then ſuppoſed to be conferred, and the hope of obtaining protection or aſſiſtance, if ſought for, is entertained. The chief received me with civility, and complied with the requeſt, that our party might be permitted to accompany the firſt meſſenger who ſhould be diſpatched into the Kangrah camp; and he alſo intimated, that ſome letters which were preparing, would ſoon be forwarded. He looked obliquely at my offering, which he touched, but would not receive. A day or two afterwards, I diſcovered this mountaineer to be compoſed of the ſame materials, which with few deviations form the common diſpoſition of the natives of India. On viſiting him a ſecond time, attended only by the cotewaul,*

* An officer of police.

(alſo the acting maſter of ceremonies), I was told that I might preſent my offering, which being an Alum Shahee rupee,* a coin of rather an inferior value in this quarter, I was received with a frown, and my money underwent a ſtrict examination. Would you not imagine that I had been bargaining with a Jew pedlar, inſtead of conferring with the chief of a country? Though I was mortified at beholding among us ſo glaring a meanneſs and want of decorum, yet as a trait of national character was diſcloſed, I received ſome ſatisfaction in obtaining ſo unequivocal a teſtimony of it. In further proof of the inconſiſtency of conduct, as well as a want of fortitude in the people of this country, I am induced to relate to you an event, (though foreign to the immediate purpoſe of this letter) that came within my own knowledge. At the time when the Mahometans were driven from Kattuck, the chief of that territory fled to Bengal, where having expended the amount of the treaſure and moveables that had been preſerved, he went to the coaſt of Coromandel, and was received into the liſt of penſioners maintained by the Navaub of the Carnatic. During the regular payment of the allowance, this man enjoyed eaſe; and by the ſhew of a palanquin, and a reſpectable retinue, he maintained a certain ſtate. The proviſion which the Navaub at that time found it expedient to make for penſioners of a higher order, cauſed a deduction from the ſtipend of his Kattuck dependant, who then

* A rupee of the preſent reign.

laid

laid down his palanquin, and purchaſed a ſmall horſe. This was doubtleſs a mortifying degradation; but the cup of his ſorrow was not yet full: for on a greater reduction, and at length, a total abolition of the penſion, this poor man loſing ſight of the character he had ſupported, and blinded by a vanity which diſcouraged all induſtrious exertion for a livelihood, became notoriouſly addicted to fraud, and petty-thefts; and was ſcarcely ſaved from an ignominious end. I have quoted theſe examples, thinking them more concluſive in conveying to you a knowledge of character, than any ſpeculative obſervation. But when the mind at an early period, is not accuſtomed to behold and admire examples of integrity and honor, or taught to ſhun with horror and contempt the habits of vice; on the contrary, when the inſtruction given to youth, tends to appreciate the duties of life by the performance of futile ceremonies, and the ſtudy of legends pregnant with fable, or violent prejudices, we are not to wonder at ſuch acts of depravity.

The flies tormented me ſo much in the Bellaſpour army, that I could not but with difficulty ſecure my food from their vile attacks. A certain quantity of poiſon I believe is contained in the body of an Indian fly, for on ſwallowing it, a nauſea and vomiting almoſt immediately ſucceed. I had imagined that the ſickneſs might proceed from the motion of the inſect in the ſtomach, but on examining one after it had been diſcharged, I perceived it without life, though but a very ſhort time deprived of its natural air.

The

The intenſe heat of the ſtomach indeed, muſt ſpeedily cauſe the ſuffocation of ſo ſmall an animal.

Our ſituation in the Bellaſpour camp was diſguſting and incommodious. The heat was in the extreme, with a compound of ſmells ariſing from the filth of the people, that groſſly tainted the air: and I became ſo anxious to eſcape, that I had determined to embrace any mode of operation which might lead to a change of quarters. This eagerneſs had almoſt produced a meaſure, which probably would have cauſed a material failure of my plan. Two meſſengers who were to convey propoſals of peace to the Kangrah camp, promiſed to conduct our party thither in ſafety, and I had reſolved to commit myſelf to their charge, though much oppoſed by my aſſociates, who decidedly ſaid, that theſe men would betray us. The chief's chobedar,* a brother Mahometan, alſo endeavoured to impreſs me with an ill opinion of theſe meſſengers. Had they formed any ſcheme of miſchief, it was happily fruſtrated on the evening previouſly to our intended departure, by the arrival of a drove of aſſes, laden with iron, who were purſuing our route. On the 29th, the joint party moved, and had arrived at the boundary of Bellaſpour, eight miles diſtant from the camp, when our troubles came thick upon us. Two of the Kangrah horſemen appeared in front, and paſſing me, went towards the rear, where they plundered the ironmongers to the amount of one hundred

* A perſon who carries a ſilver ſtick before men in high ſtation.

rupees,

rupees, which is accounted a large ſum in theſe parts. They ſeized alſo on a Kaſhmirian, who was lagging behind, and were in the act of ſtripping him, when he loudly cried out, which was not true, that he was my ſervant, and that I was a perſon of ſome diſtinction. This intelligence induced the horſemen to follow me; but on approaching, one of them obſerved that I had the appearance of a *balla audimee*,* and ſhould not ſuffer any moleſtation; that only ſtragglers, and ſingle travellers fell under their notice. Seeing them diſpoſed to this civil treatment, I procured the Kaſhmirian's releaſe, as alſo that of my own ſervant, who had come up during the parley, and had been likewiſe taken into cuſtody. It was, I believe, a fortunate event for the priſoners that I returned, for our cavaliers were then in queſt of prey, nor did they ſeem nice in the diſtinctions of perſons; for whilſt I remained, ſome ſtray paſſengers were laid under contribution, from one of whom, an aſs driver, they took a pair of ſhoes. We were informed that two hundred Sicques who had been lately entertained in the Kangrah ſervice, would ſoon appear. Aware of the licentious manners of the diſciples of Nanock,† eſpecially when employed in foreign ſervice, I would then willingly have ſacrificed a moiety of my property to have had the other ſecured. There was no other remedy than aſſuming the look of confidence and eaſe,

* In the Hindoſtany language, any perſon above the ordinary claſs, is ſo denominated.

† The founder of the Sicques.

which,

which, Heaven knows, ill correſponded with my heart: ſo puſhing my horſe into a quick trot, I was ſpeedily conveyed into the midſt of this formidable corps, who received me very attentively, but without offering any violence. Imagining our approach to have been that of the enemy, the Sicques were preparing for the fight, to which they loudly exclaimed, in the tone of religious ejaculation, that their prophet had ſummoned them. In token of reſpect, I had diſmounted, and was leading my horſe, when a Sicque, a ſmart fellow, mounted on a active mare, touched me in paſſing. The high mettled animal, whether in contempt of me or my horſe, perhaps of both, attacked us fiercely from the rear, and in the aſſault, which was violent, the Sicque fell to the ground. The action having commenced on the top of a hill, he rolled with great rapidity to the bottom of it, and in his way down, left behind him his matchlock, ſword, and turban: ſo compleat a derangement I feared, would have irritated the whole Sicque body; but on evincing the ſhew of much ſorrow for the diſaſter, and having aſſiduouſly aſſiſted in inveſting the fallen horſeman with his ſcattered appurtenances, I received general thanks.

My good fortune, which had this day repelled a ſeries of perils, conveyed me in ſafety to the camp of the Kangrah, or as he is often called, from a more ancient name of his country, the Katochin chief. We regaled ourſelves this evening with great joy, having ſuffered from hunger as well as fatigue, though we had only travelled about ſixteen or ſeventeen miles. A ſmall

body,

body, chiefly of horſe, was ſtationed at this camp; the greater part of the forces under the command of the Rajah, being employed in the ſiege of Kote Kangrah. The common road to Jumbo from hence, lay through Nadone, the principal town in the Kangrah country, and through the diſtrict of Huriepour; but theſe places being then overrun by the Sicques, we were obliged to deviate from the uſual track, and proceed to the weſtward. It is to be feared that theſe turbulent mountaineers, the diſturbers of their ſolitary abode, will ſtir up ſuch commotions in their land, as to wholly ſhut up this road, the only ſecure one from India to Kaſhmire, or render the paſſage ſo precarious, that no advantage will compenſate the riſk.*

On the 30th, we moved, and joining the kafilah of the iron merchants again, accompanied it to Sooree — ſix coſſes: — a ſmall village, of which moſt of the carriers were inhabitants. The halt was made at this village from a deſire of the carriers to ſee their families, for it was at the diſtance of a full day's journey out of their road. To the eaſtward of Sooree, which lies in a valley, we croſſed a ridge of high and ſteep mountains.

On the 31ſt, at Bompal — four coſſes: — a ſmall hamlet ſituated on an eminence. This day's journey was made ſhort for the accommodation of the iron merchants, who went to the Kangrah camp to attempt the recovery of the property which the Sicques

* This apprehenſion has been ſince verified.

had plundered; but they returned without redreſs, and now ſeemed anxious to leave the country; as inſtead of procuring a reſtitution or payment, farther demands had been made. All this night, I was expoſed to a continued and copious rain — and here let me obſerve, with ſincere thanks for the bleſſing of a hale conſtitution, that though I have, in the courſe of this journey, endured much ſeverity of weather, my health has hitherto received no injury.

A CONTINUANCE of the rain detained us at Bompal until the 2d of April, when we arrived at Chumbah — eight coſſes: — a ſmall village, depending on the chiefſhip of Jeſſoul. At a ſhort diſtance from Bompal, we were ſtopped by the collector of Nadone, who had come three miles from his houſe, in defiance of the troubled ſtate of the country, to receive from us a toll duty of a few pence. At about mid-way on the right hand ſide of the road is ſeen a place of Hindoo worſhip, at the foot of which runs the Byas Gunge,* with a rapid ſtream of about one hundred yards broad.† A great part of the road from Bompal to Chumbah lay through a valley, watered by the Byas, on the north ſide of which is ſeen the level and fertile diſtricts of Huriepour. The territory of Kangrah, or Ktochin, is limited on the north, and north-weſt by Huriepour; on the eaſt by Chumbay; on the ſouth by Kalour; and on the weſt by the Punjab. The ordinary revenue,

* The ſecond of the Punjab rivers from the Eaſtward.

† The current runs to the left.

eſtimated

eſtimated at ſeven lacks of rupees, has been much diminiſhed by the chief's alliance with the Sicques, who ſpread deſtruction wherever they go. Theſe marauders are now acting the part of the man whom fable repreſents to have been invited by the horſe, to aid his conteſt with the boar; and you know the uſes to which the thoughtleſs horſe was applied, when victory was decided in favour of the combined forces.

This day, our little party which had been joined in the Bellaſpour camp by the Kaſhmirians, reſolved, from a dread of the Sicques, who had inveſted the common track, to quit the kafilah, and through detached paths endeavour to reach Jumbo. A native trader of India, it is to be obſerved, holds his time in ſmall eſtimation, and would rather halt for two or three months, than incur even a common riſk.

On the 3d, at Dada — ten coſſes; dependant on the chief of Sebah. From a ſtream running through the village, we procured ſome excellent fiſh, of the ſize and ſomething of the taſte of trouts. This diſtrict, by its approach to the head of the Punjab, lies wholly at the mercy of the Sicques, who are I think the plaineſt dealers in the world. The fort of Sebah,* ſtanding pleaſantly on the brink of a rivulet, lay on our road; and in paſſing it, I ſaw

* Situate about three coſſes to the ſouth-weſt of Dada, and the only fortified reſidence I have ſeen among the mountains. The vicinity of the Punjab has perhaps induced the mountaineers to fortify this place.

two Sicque cavaliers ſtrike a terror into the chief and all his people, though ſhut up within their fort. They had been ſent to collect the tribute which the Sicques have impoſed on all the mountain chiefs from the Ganges to Jumbo; and, offended at the delay of the payment, theſe high ſpoken men were holding to the affrightened Hindoos, that ſtyle of language, which one of our provincial magiſtrates would direct at a gipſey, or ſturdy beggar. Indeed, my friend, no ordinary exertion of fortitude, no common ſhare of philanthropy is required, to wield with temper the rod of power; which, from the frailty of his nature, man is ever inclined to uſe with ſeverity. Yet ſurely when he looks into himſelf, he will ſee many a ſtrong reaſon to qualify its ſtroke. From a ſpirit of impatience, which having long actuated me, I am induced to think is innate, I quitted my companions, and going about a mile in front, fell in with a horſeman, who had much the appearance of a freebooter; but being well armed, and evidently the ſtronger man, I did not apprehend any riſk from a rencounter. Seeing me a ſtranger, and from the quality of my equipment, a fit ſubject for plunder, he ſtopped me, and in a peremptory manner, aſked my occupation, and place of abode. My anſwers were neither explanatory nor gracious, and my departure abrupt, though he had expreſſed a ſtrong deſire of farther communication; and ſeemed offended at the unconcern of my deportment. About a quarter of a mile farther on, I met a Sicque horſeman, well armed, who was evidently in ſearch of adventure. After reconnoitring

me

me attentively, and apprehending, I imagine, that a conteſt would be of doubtful event, for my ſword was long, and my countenance, by the air I had aſſumed, fierce, he politely ſaluted me, and paſſed. The perſon whom I firſt ſaw, had halted, and on the junction of the Sicque, a council was held by them on the ſubject of my moveables; the reſult of which was to return and take them from me. My companions who gave me this information came up while theſe men of the blade were communing on the plan of attack, and an eclairciſſement took place. They diſcovered that theſe footmen, four in number, were aſſociates of him, whoſe property they intended to invade; and naturally concluded, that however decided the odds of two to one might have been, ſo great an additional ſtrength to our party, would manifeſtly turn the chances; and, ſwayed probably by this forcible argument, they gave us no moleſtation.

On the 4th at Tulwara, — ten coſſes; a village in the diſtrict of Dutar, where the Sicque chief has erected a ſmall fort, and holds the adjacent territory. The country to the ſouthward now aſſumed a level aſpect, which to me had an effect inexpreſſibly pleaſing; for my eye had long been diſguſted, and, I may ſay, impriſoned, by mountain piled on mountain, till the higheſt pierced the clouds. The diſtrict of Dutar, or Dutarah, extends on the interior ſide of the Punjab hills, through which our late ſouthern inclination had penetrated. In this day's journey, our party was reduced to the Kaſhmirian trader and myſelf; three Kaſhmirians,

who

who had joined our party in the Bellaſpour camp, went on before, and my ſervant lagged behind. In the evening, having reached the bottom of a hill, we obſerved a body of horſemen deſcending in our road. The ſight of theſe men, who were immediately known to be Sicques, gave a ſerious alarm; and on their near approach, I depoſited, unnoticed by my companions, my little property of bills and caſh in an adjacent buſh. But we had formed an unjuſt opinion of theſe cavaliers; and I am to think myſelf ſingularly fortunate, in being enabled in two inſtances to place their conduct in a favourable point of view. This party, conſiſting of about two hundred, many of whom were Mahometans, was then marching into the Hurriepour diſtrict. Summoning an affected compoſure of countenance, we affected to ſmoke our pipes, from which ſome of the Mahometans took a whiff *en paſſant*, and at the ſame time gave us an aſſurance of protection againſt any ill deſigns of their aſſociates; for notwithſtanding the looks we had borrowed, they muſt have ſeen much embarraſſment in them. After their departure, I took my valuables out of the buſh without the obſervance of my companion, who was tranſported with joy at the eſcape, ſwearing, by his beard, that on reaching our evening quarters, he would offer up to Mahomet, or to his national ſaint Mucdoom Saib, two-pennyworth of brown ſugar, in thankſgiving for the extraordinary preſervation. We met many of the Sicque ſtragglers, who are always the moſt miſchievous; theſe we directed to ſpeedily join their companions, who, we ſaid, had ſtrictly enjoined

joined us to give ſuch directions; and this pretended meſſage gave us ſome credit; for ſeeing we had not been plundered by their party, they followed the ſame meritorious example.

A SHOP-KEEPER accommodated us with a convenient lodging at Tulwara, where, being joined by my ſervant, who had likewiſe been involved in the dangers of the day, though he had carefully preſerved the remains of the fiſh that had been procured at Dada, a ſumptuous feaſt was ſerved up, and joyouſly participated. The truth of this remark will be readily acknowledged by thoſe, who, from the like adventures, have reached in the evening a ſafe retreat. My friend, who faithfully performed the tenor of his promiſe, reprobated my inſenſibility of the providential interpoſition that had been made in our behalf. It was in vain to urge the merits of internal prayer, or to aſſert, that I had already offered unfeigned thanks for our eſcape, which I truſted would not be the leſs acceptable from the want of ſugar. This being a doctrine wholly repugnant to his creed, which exiſted only in noiſy and oſtentatious ceremony, I drew on myſelf a further ſevere reproach.

ON the 5th at Badpour — ſeven coſſes: a populous village in the Noujrpour diſtrict. About two coſſes to the eaſtward of Badpour, we croſſed at the Rhay Ghaut, or Puttun,* in a ferry-boat, the Byas Gungah, and came into the Jumbo road, which in this quarter has not yet experienced the depredation of the Sicques.

* The name of a ferry in ſome parts of the Punjab.

ON

On the 6th, at Gungatau—ten coſſes. In the paſſage of a rivulet near this village, the horſe, in ſuddenly ſtopping to drink, threw me headlong into the water, where among the reſt of my chattels, a bill on Jumbo was thoroughly drenched: nor was this the firſt injury it had received.

On the 7th, at Nourpour; the reſidence of the chief of a diſtrict of the ſame name. This town ſituate on the top of a hill, which is aſcended by ſtone ſteps, has the appearance of opulence and induſtry. Towards the ſouth-eaſt the country is open and of a pleaſant aſpect, to which a winding ſtream of fine water gives additional beauty. Mountains that have already made my eyes ach, contract the view to the weſt and north; but theſe have their uſes; and having experienced an eſſential one, not to give it a place would be ungenerous. The heat of the ſun now growing intenſe would have been ſeverely felt, had not the wind which came from the north-weſt received a cool refreſhing quality from the ſnows which on that quarter cover the hills; and had it not been for a like favourable ſituation, the reſidence in the Bellaſpour camp, the remembrance of which makes me ſhudder, might have proved fatal to us.

On a plain adjacent to the town of Nourpour, was encamped a Jumbo kafilah, chiefly the property of Sunaſſees,* and conſigned

* Though this ſect, conformably to the tenets of their doctrine, ought to renounce or never engage in the affairs of the world, yet many of its members have become merchants, ſoldiers, and ſtateſmen.

to

to the Dehli market. From theſe people I learned, that the chief of Jumbo was much embarraſſed in his finances, from a deſtructive war he had entered into with the Sicqves: that to raiſe ſupplies he had levied a general contribution on the inhabitants of the city; and that his exactions had induced many of the principal merchants to abandon the place. The Sunaſſees had employed in their ſervice two or three Kaſhmirians, who are men of an univerſal occupation, and endowed with unwearied patience and activity in the cauſe of gain. They told me that I ſhould incur a manifeſt riſk in going to Jumbo, at a time when the appearance of perſons of any property, attracted the notice of government: an information then more alarming, as my buſineſs at Jumbo required a perſonal attendance. Whilſt I am writing of Nourpour, it may not be ſuperfluous to mention, that a reſpectable merchant named Daud Khan, a native of the Punjab, reſides in that town. He had lived many years at Jumbo, but having felt the oppreſſion of that government, he has taken refuge in Nourpour, where he enjoys, with a moderate ſecurity of property, the benefit of a fine air and a plentiful country; and ſhould any of our countrymen come this way in the Mahometan character, they may be confidently aſſured of deriving conveniency, from an acquaintance with Daud Khan.

On the 8th, halted. On the 9th, at the village of Bungurte—eight coſſes. My ſervant, from a cold and a conſtitutional weakneſs in his breaſt, which he ſaid had long afflicted him, was this day ſcarcely

able to walk. I am now fearful that the burthen he was loaded with, was too heavy a one, and I am alſo to accuſe myſelf of not alleviating its weight, by an exerciſe of thoſe offices of kindneſs, which the law of humanity, as well as the uſages of ſervitude, eſpecially in the Aſiatic world, obliges a maſter to ſhew his ſervant, the more ſo if he is a good one; and to ſay that this follower of my fortunes was not a good ſervant, would be an unworthy attempt to exculpate, at the expence of his character, my frequent neglect. But ſhould I ever be enabled to recompence his worth, the act ſhall be claſſed among thoſe of my beſt deeds. I uſed to fortify my occaſional diſſatisfaction at him, by enlarging too rigorouſly on the petulance of his temper; but I hold the reaſon no longer valid, nor will it atone for the compunction I feel, when I recall to my mind the many affectionate ſervices which the honeſt fellow performed in the courſe of a laborious journey.

The diſtricts of Nourpour on the north, are bounded by the river Rawee; on the eaſt by the Chambay * country; on the weſt by ſome ſmall Hindoo diſtricts, lying at the head of the Punjab. and by the river Byas; and on the ſouth by Huriepour. The revenues of Nourpour are calculated at four lacks of rupees, and it would ſeem that it enjoys a ſtate of more internal quiet, is leſs molested by the Sicques, and governed more equitably than any of the adjacent territories.

* A mountainous territory of large extent.

On

ON the 10th, at Plaſſee — ten coſſes: — a ſmall village in the Biſſouly diſtrict. About eight miles to the north-weſt of Bunguree, and oppoſite to the fort of Biſſouly, croſſed the Rawee,* which is about one hundred and twenty yards in breadth, and very rapid. In the ferry-boat were two Sicques going to the fort, of which, a detachment they belonged to, had taken poſſeſſion, in conſequence of being called in to the aſſiſtance of the Biſſouly chief. Though this be the invariable reſult of every connection made with the Sicques, the infatuated mountaineers never fail to ſeek their aid when engaged in war. A bordering chief had invaded the Biſſouly diſtricts, plundered the inhabitants, and burned their villages, before any oppoſition was made. The Sicques were called in to repel the enemy, and defend the fort of Biſſouly; but after performing the required ſervice, they became pleaſed with their new ſituation, and refuſed to relinquiſh it.

A QUICK progreſs through this country, and avoiding the track of the Sicques, were ſtrongly, though unneceſſarily, recommended to us. The boatman at the ferry of Biſſouly, though a brother Mahometan, made an exorbitant demand of hire, which was conſiderably leſſened by the interference of the Sicque horſemen, who ſaw the impoſition, and had only to make known their will to effect obedience. The journey of this evening, ſolitary and dreary, gave a wrong bent to every ſpring of the imagination,

* The Rawee is the Central Punjab river, and runs near the city of Lahore.

which ſullenly refuſed to receive one chearful or pleaſing idea. If ſuch did begin to ſhoot forth, the proſpect of a deſerted village, a deſolate country, immediately deſtroyed it, and introduced in its ſtead, thoſe pregnant with the horrors and miſeries of war. Great God! that the common evils of life ſo abundantly heaped on our heads, ſhould not be felt as already too grievous, without the wilful encounter of additional miſchiefs! This propenſity in the nature of man, indicates a diſpoſition at once deſtructive of the purpoſes which he ſeems deſigned to execute, and diſgraceful to the intellects he ſo amply poſſeſſes.

An obliging houſe-keeper in the village of Plaſſee, accommodated me this evening more agreeably than I could have expected. His little tenement was compoſed of materials that had reſiſted the late conflagration of the country, and he had, with his family, reſumed the quiet poſſeſſion of it. Seeing me oppreſſed and languid, from the effects of a fever, which had ſeized me on the road, he procured me a bed, and gave me every nouriſhment which his houſe afforded.

On the 11th, at the village of Buddoo — ten coſſes; the reſidence of a petty chief, tributary to Jumbo. This day an annual fair was held at an adjacent hamlet, which being near our road, we mixed with the numerous ſpectators of the feſtival. The good humour and mirth accompanying this meeting exhibited a ſtrong contraſt to the ſcene of yeſterday, and deſcribed, in lively colours, the various bounties which flow from peace. Among the diver-

ſions

I obſerved the wheel with boxes ſuſpended from [illegible] of common uſe in the ſouthern parts of India, for whirling [illegible] thoſe who are diſpoſed to make ſuch aerial circuits. More than once have I taken my ſeat in one of thoſe whirligigs, and can aſſure you, that the entertainment, though not of a ſober kind, has its pleaſures; and what is more than you can ſay of many a pleaſure, it ſets you down where it took you up. My ſervant did not arrive this evening, and from having hitherto wholly relied on his ſervices, I ſuſtained a great inconveniency. But a Kaſhmirian family at Buddo, on the ſcore of an acquaintance with my companion, in a certain degree relieved it, by giving us a friendly reception, and a ſlender ſupper.

On the 12th at Mancote — eight coſſes. A chief depending on Jumbo reſided at this village, which ſtands on an eminence partially ſkirted by a ſmall river. Here my troubles branched out anew, and though not deſerving a rank in the liſt of misfortunes, involved me in various difficulties. My Kaſhmirian aſſociate having by miſtake proceeded beyond our place of rendezvous, there was no one to prepare my victuals, or to take care of the horſe. Though the Hindoos hold in abomination the performance of any menial office for ſtrangers, yet the ſhop-keeper at Mancote, from whom I had purchaſed the neceſſaries of the day, afforded me great aſſiſtance. He gave me houſe-room, a bed, and alſo ſome of his houſehold utenſils, for holding the horſe's corn, and my own proviſion. From an aſſociation with thoſe who had obviated

my

my various wants, and had even rendered the [illegible] one, I was at once deprived of all help. In the firſt [illegible] cleaned and fed my horſe, nor did he deſerve leſs at my hands; he was a good-tempered, ſure-footed, active animal. Had he not indeed been thus qualified, he could not have ſupported ſuch fatigue, or have clambered over the ſteep and and rocky mountains that had hitherto ſtood in his way. After this care, it was neceſſary to remedy the ſtate of my own wants, which became urgent and clamorous, for I had not eaten any thing that day.

Being told that a mendicant Seid * of eminent ſanctity reſided in the upper part of the town, I preſented myſelf to him, told my ſtory, and earneſtly entreated his aid. I had imagined that the man who lived on public benevolence, whoſe welfare in the world was promoted by a common exerciſe of humanity, would have chearfully come forward to my ſuccour, eſpecially as the requeſt had no tendency to touch his property. But I reckoned without my hoſt. Never did mitred prieſt in all the plenitude of his power, rolling amidſt the pluralities of benefice, regard a meagre curate with a deeper contempt of eye, than did this haughty deſcendant of Mahomet receive my ſupplication. Simply ſetting forth the loſs of my ſervant, and the inability to ſupply his place, I requeſted that he would direct his people to prepare for me a meal, the materials of which were all in readineſs. This langua[illegible]

* The deſcendants of Mahomet are ſo denominated.

had

effect on the Seid, who confiding, I ſuppoſe, wholly in the efficacy of faith, had exploded from his creed the doctrine of good works; or, conſidering perhaps the trade of begging to be a monopoly of his order, he wiſhed to expel and diſcourage all interlopers. After warmly expatiating on the difficulties that ſurrounded me, throwing in alſo ſome ſtrictures on his conduct, he grumbled an aſſent, but with an expreſs proviſo that I ſhould produce fire-wood. I could as eaſily have brought him a buſſe of diamonds as a ſtick, for it was then dark, and indeed hunger and fatigue had made me incapable of exertion. Turning from him with indignation, I loudly reprobated his violation of what even the rudeſt Mahometans hold ſacred, the rights of hoſpitality; a ready performance of which, he ought to know, was earneſtly enjoined, and that the Divine vengeance was peculiarly denounced againſt all who tranſgreſs its law. This exclamation, delivered with heat, rouzed the attention of his adherents, one of whom deſiring me to be pacified, propoſed to adjuſt the embarraſſment. He carried me to the houſe of a ſinging girl, who, on learning the ſtory of my wants, tucked up her garment with a ſmiling alacrity, and commenced the buſineſs of relieving them without delay. It would have made your heart glad to have ſeen this honeſt girl baking my bread and boiling my peas, ſhe did it with ſo good a will; frequently obſerving, that I had conferred an honour upon her, and that the preſent ſervice, was but a ſmall return for the many favours ſhe had received from thoſe of my claſs. Will not you judge the declaration

tion of her refuſing all donation, an Eaſtern hyperbole! [illegible] affirm to you that it is a genuine ſtory, and were Mancore at no further diſtance from Lucknow, than Shieck Serus,† you might procure, from this honeſt girl, a teſtimony of its truth.

On the 13th I arrived at Manſir — eight coſſes. The country now became more open, and the vallies better cultivated than any I have ſeen to the weſtward of Biſſouly. The journey this day was pleaſant, and what in my proceeding was extraordinary, I did not deviate from the road, though alone. In paſſing near an encampment of beggars, (a merry troop they were) they deſired me to alight and take ſome refreſhment: the invitation was thankfully accepted, and I partook of a coarſe, but cordial meal, which was ſerved up with frequent profeſſions of welcome. Manſir is compoſed of a few houſes, ſtanding on the margin of a beautiful ſheet of water, which is abundantly ſupplied with fiſh; but being held a ſacred or royal property, they live unmoleſted. The lands of Manſir were appropriated, by a former chief of Jumbo, to the maintenance of certain Byraghees,* who in this delicious ſpot ſeem to enjoy every pleaſure which men in India can taſte. But here I am checked and called upon to crave your pardon, for theſe ſolitary ſectaries have precluded women from their ſociety; and to ſay that any portion of life, however replete with other gratifica-

* This place is about ſix miles diſtant from Lucknow.

† A religious tribe of Hindoos who profeſs celibacy.

tions,

tions, can yield a genuine pleaſure without women, is to ſuppoſe that our day could be chearful without the light of the ſun. At this village the wife of a Mahometan oilman conducted my culinary buſineſs, but in a manner far different from that of my late muſical friend: ſhe took moſt unwarrantable emoluments out of an ill-dreſſed ſupper; and her cat, which ſeemed to have a congenial temper, made an attack on my baggage at night, and carried off the little ſtock of proviſions which I had prepared for the next day's breakfaſt.

LEST my arrival at Jumbo ſhould excite enquiry, which from the diſpoſition of the chief might not be favourable, I denominated myſelf an officer in the Jumbo ſervice, travelling from the army, which was then in the field, to the city. The road this day leading in a ſouth-weſt * direction, was the moſt dreary one I had ever ſeen, and became more ſo from the want of a companion. On approaching ſo large a town as Jumbo, I expected to have ſeen a moderately populous country; but the aſpect was altogether the reverſe. Many miles of the road lay through a defile of ſand, the ſides of which conſiſt of lofty rocks, and nearly perpendicular. The predicament in which I then ſtood gave a gloomy caſt to my thoughts, which naturally adverted to that long eſtabliſhed poſition, of "man being a ſociable animal;" the truth of which few

* The ſouthern inclination of this day, was cauſed, I apprehend, from the formation of ſome branch of the mountains.

are more convinced of than myſelf. I did not dwell on the various uſes inherent in the principles of ſociety, nor on the grander benefits ſo extenſively diffuſed by general compact; but was contented with viewing the leſſer conveniencies which it imparts, with reflecting on the caſual, but grateful enjoyments which men receive from the moſt fluctuating intercourſe. What harmony, what good humour, are often ſeen circulating in a ſweetmeat ſhop, the coffee houſe of India! where all ſubjects, except that of the ladies, are treated with freedom: not ſo eloquently perhaps, nor with ſuch refinement of language, as among the politicians of an European capital, yet with equal fervour and ſtrength of voice. The favourite topic is war; there you may hear of exploits performed by a ſingle arm, at the recital of which even Secunder * would have grown pale, and Ruſtum † himſelf trembled. The pleaſure of communication, by which they become the heroes of their own tale, is a keen ſpur to the various claſs of adventurers, and perhaps fewer men would encounter ſervices of hazard, were not a pleaſure expected from their recital.

On the ſide of the road, to my great joy, I at length diſcovered a family ſitting on a narrow green ſpot, where availing themſelves of the ſingular ſituation, they were grazing their cattle. I ſat myſelf down without ceremony, and was preſented with what I

* The Aſiatic name of Alexander the Great.

† A hero celebrated in the ancient legends of Perſia.

have

have often recollected with pleaſure, for the heat of the day had made me very thirſty), a cup of butter-milk. The father told me that the oppreſſions of his landlord had forced him to quit his houſe, and he was then in queſt of ſome ſecurer reſidence. On your ſide of India, acts are doubtleſs committed that tend to ſully the honour and impreſs an odium on the character of our nation; but they are, believe me, faint ſpecks when compared with the deeds of injuſtice and rapacity practiſed in other Aſiatic countries. One of the family ſuffered much pain from a lacerated finger, and as all perſons of my colour are in India denominated ſurgeons, wizards, and artillery-men, I was called upon to adminiſter help, which I did gratis to their great ſatisfaction.

Towards the evening, I arrived at the lower town of Jumbo, where ſeeing a retired houſe at which I intended to have ſought admiſſion, I diſcovered a perſon who, about a month before, travelled for ſome days in the ſame party with me; but being employed on ſome ſervice of diſpatch, he had left it. This man being now the ſervant of a Kaſhmirian at Jumbo, for whom I had brought a letter of introduction, and whoſe name I uſed to mention in the courſe of the journey, deſtroyed my ſcheme of privacy. He ran off as ſoon as he had diſtinctly ſeen me, and ſpeedily returned with his maſter, who would not reſt ſatisfied until he had lodged me in his houſe, though we were obliged to proceed thither in the midſt of a heavy rain: it would be a tedious and flat ſtory, to detail the multiplied modes of the reſpect of this Kaſhmirian for

my perſon, which he had never before ſeen; or to enumerate his painful, yet inceſſant attentions. Whatever partiality I might entertain for my own merits, I was neceſſarily impelled to ſee that his aſſiduity proceeded from a belief of the opulence, and the will of tranſacting the commercial buſineſs of his gueſt. After he had gone through the long routine of my extraordinary qualities and accompliſhments, of whoſe excellency he had been adviſed by his correſpondent at Lucknow, he congratulated my ſingular good fortune in having met him ſo early on my arrival; for except himſelf, I ſhould not have found an honeſt man in Jumbo. Such, my friend, is the effervescence of Oriental ſpeech, which if expoſed to the colder air of the north, would ſubſide into that ſtrain of language ſpoken every day in Change Ally and Cheapſide. It was beſt not to undeceive my Kaſhmirian, as the character of a merchant is more reſpected here than any other, and under which the leaſt ſuſpicion is entertained of a ſtranger. On preſenting my bill to the banker at Jumbo, I found, from its having been twice drenched in water, that the folds adhered together as firmly as if they had been paſted. The banker,* with much good nature, ſoaking the paper in water, and opening the folds with care, was enabled to read, though with difficulty, the contents. Had he been diſpoſed to protract the payment, there was ſufficient cauſe, but holding out no demur, he at once ſaid the bill was a good one, kindly obſerving alſo, that as

* His name is Juala Naut, the nephew of Kaſhmiry Mull, at Benares.

my

my journey had been long and fatiguing, I ſhould have brought an order for a larger ſum.

JUMBO is ſituated on the ſide of a hill, and contains two diſtinct diviſions, which are termed the upper and the lower towns. The bottom of the hill is waſhed by the river Rawee,* about forty or fifty yards broad, and fordable at moſt ſeaſons of the year. Many water-mills ſtand on its banks for grinding corn, which are conſtructed in a neater manner than any I have ſeen in India, and were introduced by the Kaſhmirians, who have greatly improved as well as enriched this town. The ſhort ſtay at Jumbo prevented me from procuring much ſatisfactory information of its hiſtory, or the cauſes which have produced its important commerce, riches, and luxury: for Jumbo, even in its decayed ſtate, is a mart of the firſt note in this quarter of the country. Perhaps the collection of ſuch materials would not have compenſated the labour of peruſal, or afforded you that inſtruction which I ever wiſh to be the effect of my communications: — but ſuch as I have procured, ſhall be genuinely laid before you.

PREVIOUSLY to Nadir Shah's invaſion of India, the common road from Dehli to Kaſhmire, lay through Sirhend, Lahore, and Heerpour, the paſs of which is fully deſcribed by Mr. Bernier, under the name of Bember. Since the inroad of the Perſians, Afghans, and the Mahrattas, but eſpecially ſince the period of the

* It falls into the Chinnaun.

Sicque

Sicque conqueſts, that track has been rendered unſafe to merchants, and is now diſuſed. This obſtruction diverted the Kaſhmirian trade into the channel of Jumbo, which being ſhut up from the Punjab by a ſtrong chain of mountains, difficult of acceſs to cavalry, it has been preferred to the Lahore road, though the journey is tedious, and the expenſes of merchandize increaſed

Runzeid Deve, the father of the preſent chief of Jumbo, who deſervedly acquired the character of a juſt and wiſe ruler, largely contributed to the wealth and importance of Jumbo. Perceiving the benefits which would ariſe from the reſidence of Mahometan merchants, he held out to them many encouragements, and obſerved towards them a diſintereſted and an honourable conduct. Negative virtues only are expected from an Aſiatic deſpot, and under ſuch a ſanction his ſubjects might deem themſelves fortunate; but the chief of Jumbo went farther than the forbearance of injuries; he avowedly protected and indulged his people, particularly the Mahometans, to whom he allotted a certain quarter of the town, which was thence denominated Moghulpour; and that no reſerve might appear in his treatment of them, a moſque was erected in the new colony; a liberality of diſpoſition the more conſpicuous, and confering the greater honour on his memory, as it is the only inſtance of the like toleration in this part of India, and as the Kaſhmirians who chiefly compoſed his Mahometan ſubjects, have been, ſince their converſion, rigorous perſecutors of the Hindoos. He was ſo deſirous alſo of acquiring their confidence and eſteem,

that

that when he has been riding through their quarter during the time of prayer, he never failed to ſtop his horſe until the prieſt had concluded his ritual exclamations. The Hindoos once complained to this chief, that the public wells of the town were defiled by the veſſels of the Mahometans, and deſired that they might be reſtricted to the water of the river; but he abruptly diſmiſſed the complaint, ſaying, that water was a pure element, deſigned for the general uſe of mankind, and could not be polluted by the touch of any claſs of people. An adminiſtration ſo munificent and judicious, at the ſame time that it enforced the reſpect of his own ſubjects, made Jumbo a place of extenſive commercial reſort, where all deſcriptions of men experienced, in their perſons and property, a full ſecurity.

The articles of merchandize conſtituting the trade of Jumbo, and Kaſhmire, are tranſported by men, uſually Kaſhmirians, whoſe burthens are heavy, two of them making the load of a ſtrong mule, and the hire is fixed at the rate of four rupees for each carrier. The ſhauls, when exported from Kaſhmire, are packed in an oblong baie, containing a certain weight or quantity, which in the language of the country is termed a *biddery*, the outward covering of which is a buffalo or ox's hide, ſtrongly ſewed with leather thongs. As theſe packages are ſuppoſed to amount, with little variation, to a value long ſince aſcertained, they are ſeldom opened until conveyed to the deſtined market. A Kaſhmirian porter carries a load as a ſoldier does his knap-ſack, and when diſ-

poſed

poſed to reſt, he places under it a ſtick in the form of a crutch which ſupports the load and aſſiſts him alſo in walking. Two cauſes are aſſigned for employing men only in this ſervice: an agreement, it is ſaid ariſing from a mutual jealouſy, has been made between the chiefs bordering on either ſide of the river Chinnaun,* that no fixed bridge ſhall be conſtructed, or any boat ſtationed on that ſtream. The other cauſe aſcribed, which ſeems to be more forcible, is the ſtupendous height and ſteepneſs of the intervening mountains, which renders the paſſages dangerous, if not wholly impracticable, to either a horſe or mule.

It appears that Jumbo continued to increaſe its power and commerce until the year 1770, the period of Runzeid Deve's death, when one of his ſons, the preſent chief, contrary to the intention and expreſs will of his father, ſeized on the government, put to death one of his brothers, the intended ſucceſſor, and impriſoned another; who having made his eſcape ſought the protection of the Sicques. Pleaſed in having obtained ſo favourable a pretext for entering Jumbo, which they attempted in vain during the adminiſtration of Runzeid Devè, the Sicques promiſed to eſpouſe the fugitive's cauſe with vigour. A ſmall ſum had been annually exacted by them from Jumbo, but in a much leſs proportion than what was levied in the adjacent territories, The Sicques, indeed, aware of the reſpectable ſtate of the Jumbo force, and the ability

* The fourth Punjab river from the eaſtward.

of

of the chief, were contented with the name of tribute. The moſt valuable diviſion of the Jumbo diſtricts, lay in the plain country, forming part of the northern Punjab; which, under pretence of affording aſſiſtance to the perſon who lately ſought their protection, a body of Sicques have laid waſte. They are now proſecuting a vigorous war againſt the preſent chief, who through the defection of many of his people, driven by oppreſſions to the party of his brother, became unable to make any effectual ſtand; and that his ill fortune might be complete, he called into his aid, a party of Sicque mercenaries, commanded by Mhah Sing, a powerful officer in that quarter, who has firmly eſtabliſhed his authority at Jumbo, and has erected a fort at the ſouth entrance of the principal paſs leading into the Punjab. For defraying the expence incurred by the Sicque troops, the Jumbo chief has made rigorous demands on the native inhabitants of the city, and is now throwing an eye on the foreign merchants; who, dreading his diſpoſition and neceſſities, have taken a general alarm. It was with much pleaſure I ſaw the perſon on whom my bill was drawn, a man of a fair and honourable character, enjoying, amidſt theſe diſorders, a moderate ſecurity. He ſeemed to have procured the favour of Mhah Sing, who, with other officers of the party, ſupported him againſt the deſigns of the Rajah. The perſon entruſted with the government of the town of Jumbo, during the abſence of the chief then in the field, was ſo exact a counterpart of his maſter

in the ſyſtem of oppreſſion, that I was adviſed to a ſpeedy departure, leſt I ſhould fall under an inſpection. Though much fatigued by an harraſſing journey, and the ſale of my horſe, with other neceſſary concerns, was to be adjuſted, ſuch was the aſcendency of my fears, that on the 16th of the month, I was ready to proceed.

In laying before you theſe ſcattered pieces of intelligence, I muſt not forget to notice, that the courtezans and female dancers of the Punjab and Kaſhmire, or rather a mixed breed of both theſe countries, are beautiful women, and are held in great eſtimation through all the northern parts of India: the merchants eſtabliſhed at Jumbo, often become ſo fondly attached to a dancing girl, that, neglecting their occupation, they have been known to diſſipate, at her will, the whole of their property; and I have ſeen ſome of them reduced to a ſubſiſtence on charity; for theſe girls, in the manner of their profeſſion, are profuſe and rapacious.

My Kaſhmirian hoſt, who continued to oppreſs me with kindneſs, had a brother living in the ſame houſe, who was ſo much afflicted with the rheumatiſm, that he could not ſtir out of his room. Poſſeſſing much uſeful information, with a pleaſant ſociable temper, I was glad to be admitted to his converſation, which equally amuſed me, and contributed to a knowledge of this quarter of India. He gave me alſo ſome directions for my conduct in Kaſhmire, which were delivered with an air of candour, and ſo apparently

apparently void of deſign, that I ſhould have been ridiculouſly ſceptical in not giving them credit. The day before I left Jumbo, he called me into his room, and in very affectionate language, ſaid, "My friend, you are now about viſiting a country, whoſe inhabitants are of a character different from any you have hitherto "ſeen, and it behoves you to be wary and diligent, for they are "a ſubtle and keen people. You muſt particularly be on your "guard againſt my brother, who is now in that country, and "will probably endeavour to borrow ſome of your money. Steadily withſtand his ſolicitations, nor lend him a rupee; for if you "do, the money is loſt. Make your diſburſements only on the "delivery of the goods, and, however urgent he is, do not make "any advance." He diſplayed, I thought, a ſingular trait of honeſty in giving an advice wholly diveſted of a tendency to promote the intereſts of his family, at the expence of fair dealing.

THOUGH the diſtricts of Buddoo and Chinanah * do not at this day form immediate appendages of Jumbo, they are ſo intimately dependent on its policy, that to avoid prolixity, I will throw their limits into one deſcription. This united territory is bounded on the north by the river Chinaun, which divides it from Kiſhtewer; on the eaſt by independent Hindoo diſtricts; on the ſouth by Biſſouly; and on the weſt by the Punjab. It would be hazarding too haſty an aſſertion to offer any ſpecific

* This diſtrict lies to the weſtward of Jumbo.

calculation of the Jumbo revenue, as the larger moiety is produced by import and export duties, which are now in a fluctuating ſtate, and have been diminiſhing ſince the acceſſion of the preſent chief; but the current information of the country, ſtates the ordinary receipt at five lacks of rupees, exclusive of the produce of Buddoo and Chinanah.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your's, &c.

LETTER

LETTER XI.

DEAR SIR,

THE frequent introduction of the Sicques to your notice, will have naturally excited a deſire to examine the hiſtory of this new and extraordinary people, who within a period of twenty years, have conquered a tract of country, extending in certain directions from the Ganges to the Indus. My knowledge of the ſubject does not permit me to deduce, on ſubſtantial authority, their hiſtory from the period in which Nanock their firſt inſtitutor and law-giver lived, or mark with an order of dates the progreſs which this people have made, and the varying gradations of their power, until their attainment of their preſent ſtate of national importance. You who are apprized of the futility of the documents which compoſe the general texture of Eaſtern record,* who

* Neither the genius of the people nor the form of their government is favourable to the growth of hiſtory, which is rarely ſeen to flouriſh on deſpotic ground. The actions of Aſiatic princes are uſually recorded by their own ſcribes; and we know that a large portion of the annals of India was manufactured under imperial inſpection. It is, therefore, ſcarcely within the verge of probability, that a writer, attracted by ſo powerful an influence, would dared to have thrown the piercing light of Hiſtory on the

who have witneſſed the irreſiſtible tendency of an Aſiatic mind to fiction, and the produce of its ductile fancy, will grant me an indulgent ſcope, and will, I truſt, believe, that though the body of the hiſtory be not complete, ſuch parts only will be noticed, as are either founded on received tradition, or on thoſe legends which have the leaſt exceptionable claims to credit.

UNDER ſhelter of this preliminary, I will proceed to inform you that Nanock,* the founder of the Sicque nation, was born in the year of the Chriſtian æra, 1469, during the reign of Sultan Beloul,† at the village of Tulwundy,‡ about ſixty miles to the weſtward of Lahore. Nanock appears to have poſſeſſed qualities happily adapted to effect the inſtitution of a new ſyſtem of religion. He was inflexibly juſt; he enjoyed from nature a commanding

the reigning monarch, or even to have examined with freedom the actions of his anceſtors, who have, for more than two hundred years, maintained an unbroken ſucceſſion of the Empire of Hindoſtan. Oriental ſpeech, pregnant with figure, and capable of expreſſing the wildeſt flights of fancy, diſdains the limits of Hiſtory. It is better fitted to modulate poetic ſtrains, and deſcribe the wide region of romance; where it can roam without reſtraint, and happily without the power of committing extenſive injuries.

* He was of the *Chittery* or ſecond caſt of Hindoos, and according to a ſecret belief of the Sicques, a ſpecies of ſecondary incarnation of the Supreme Deity.

† A Patan king of Dehli, who reigned previous to Baber's conqueſt of Hindoſtan.

‡ This village is now known by the name of Rhaypour. The terms given by the Sicques to their places of worſhip, are *Sunghut*, *Durmſallah*, *and Dairah*, words ſignifying, in the Hinduee, an aſſembly of the people, a charitable or pious foundation, and a houſe. This laſt appellation ſeems to be applied in an eminent ſenſe, as "the "houſe." The Sicques, in commemoration of the place of Nanock's birth, have erected an edifice at Tulwundy, where a grand feſtival is annually celebrated.

elocution,

elocution, and was endowed with a calm paſſive fortitude, which ſucceſsfully ſupported him through the long courſe of a dangerous occupation. The tenets of Nanock forbid the worſhip of images, and ordain that the places of public prayer ſhall be of plain conſtruction, and devoid of every exhibition of figure. A book, entitled the *Grunth*, which contains the civil and religious inſtitutes of Nanock, is the only typical object which the Sicques have admitted into their places of worſhip. Inſtead of the intermediation of ſubordinate deities, they are directed to addreſs their prayer to one God, who, without the aid of any delegate, is to be conſidered the unaſſociated ruler of the univerſe.* Though many eſſential differences exiſt between the religious code of the Hindoos and that of the Sicques, a large ſpace of their ground-work exhibits ſtrong features of ſimilarity. The article indeed of the admiſſion of proſelytes amongſt the Sicques, has cauſed an eſſential deviation from the Hindoo ſyſtem, and apparently levelled thoſe barriers which were conſtructed by Brimha, for the arrangement of the different ranks and profeſſions of his people. Yet this indiſcriminate admiſſion, by the qualifications which have been adopted, do not widely infringe on the cuſtoms and prejudices of thoſe Hindoos

* When it is noticed that the worſhip of the Hindoos is loaded with a maſs of puerile ceremony, and oftentimes conducted with a ridiculous grimace, it will not ſeem ſurprizing that a creed, founded on principles calculated to promote the eſtabliſhment of a ſimple uniform religion, and promulgated by a man of diſtinguiſhed tribe and exemplary manners, ſhould draw to it proſelytes even in the bigotted regions of India.

who

who have embraced the faith of the Sicques. They ſtill preſerve the diſtinctions which originally marked their ſects, and perform many of the ancient ceremonies of their nation. They form matrimonial connections only in their own tribes, and adhere implicitly to the rules preſcribed by the Hindoo law, in the choice and preparation of their food. The only aliment uſed in common, by the Sicques at this day, is the *purſaud*,* or ſacred bread, from the participation of which no tribe or claſs of their people is excluded.

Few events of hiſtorical importance are related of Nanock, the founder of this ſect, who poſſeſſing neither territory nor wealth, nor aided by the force of arms, preached his doctrine in peace, and manifeſted, in the countries which he viſited, an unaffected ſimplicity of manners. He journeyed through moſt of the kingdoms in India, from whence, according to the tradition of the Sicques, he went into Perſia and Arabia. In his travels, which with ſhort intervals continued for the ſpace of fifteen years, he was attended by a Mahometan muſician, named Murdana, who became his convert, and ever remained faithfully attached to his perſon. It is ſaid that in one of the expeditions of Baber † into

* The *purſaud* is ſaid to be a compoſition of flour, butter, and certain ſpices; this bread after being conſecrated by the Bramins, is alſo uſed by ſome ſects of Hindoos in the ceremony of adminiſtering an oath, particularly in that quarter of the Oriſſa province, contiguous to the temple of Juggud Nautt.

† Baber defeated the Patan King of Hindoſtan, in A. D. 1526.

India,

nock having been apprehended by ſome of the ſoldiers, t before that prince, who informed of the ſanctity of er, treated him with reſpect and indulgence. As no he Moghul Empire bear a teſtimony of the exiſtence of during the period in which Nanock lived, it cannot be that his converts were numerous or powerful. Nanock, according to the Sicque records, died in the month of Auguſt, A. D. 1539, aged ſeventy years, at Dayrah, a village on the banks of the Rawee, about forty miles to the northward of Lahore, where a vaſt concourſe of people annually aſſemble, to perform certain ceremonies in commemoration of the day of his deceaſe. Nanock, though he had two ſons, devolved the charge of the miſſion to his favourite diſciple Anghut,* a Hindoo of the Chittery tribe, to whom he alſo entruſted the publication † of the laws and precepts of his doctrine. Anghut, who ſeems to have paſſed his time in retirement, died about the year 1542, at the town of Khadour,‡ the place of his nativity. He was ſucceeded by Ammerdaſs, a native of the Lahore diſtrict, who propagated the new doctrine without moleſtation, and died in the year 1574, at the village of

* Nanock changed the original name of his ſucceſſor, which was Lina.

† The religious and hiſtorical writings of the Sicques, are written in a character called the *Gooroo Mhookee*, or the language of the *Gooroos*, or prieſts. This letter, which is ſaid to have been invented by Nanock, differs from the various characters in uſe among the Hindoos.

‡ A village in the Punjab, about forty miles to the eaſtward of Lahore.

Govindual.* Ramdaſs,† who had eſpouſed the daugh
laſt preceptor of the Sicques, was then choſen the re
of their ſect. This prieſt lived in the reign of Acba
cording to the tradition of the Sicques, experienced ſom
that emperor's favour. Retiring in the latter part of
a ſmall diſtrict‡ in the vicinity of Lahore, which A
granted to him, he founded the town of Ramdaſſpour. He repaired alſo and ornamented a reſervoir of water, which had in ancient times been dedicated at that place by the Hindoos to their God *Ram*, and to which he now gave the name of *Amrut Sir*.§ Ramdaſs made a compilation of the hiſtory and precepts of his predeceſſors, and annexing his own commentaries, ordained that his diſciples ſhould form the principles of their faith on the doctrine ſet forth in the joint collection. Ramdaſs died at the town he had founded about the year 1581, and was ſucceeded by his ſon Arjun, who having incurred the diſpleaſure of a Hindoo ‖ favoured by Jehanguir, was committed by that prince to the perſecution of his enemy; and his death, which happened in the year 1606, at Lahore, was cauſed it is ſaid by the rigour of confine-

* Situate on the Byas, the ſecond Punjab river from the eaſtward.

† This Gooroo was born in the city of Lahore.

‡ At the diſtance of twenty four miles from Lahore.

§ *Amrut*, according to the mythology of the Hindoos, is a water ſaid to beſtow immortality on thoſe who drink it; and *Sir*, in certain dialects of the Hinduee, ſignifies a piece of water

‖ Named Chaundoo.

ment.

ment. The ſucceſſion devolved on Hurrgovind, his only ſon, who actuated by revenge for the cruelties exerciſed on his father, and ſtrongly ſupported by the enthuſiaſtic valour of his adherents, he dragged the Hindoo from his houſe, though within the walls of Lahore, and put him to death. Fearing the effects of the emperor's diſpleaſure, Hurrgovind fled to Hurtarpour, a village founded by his father, where he collected an armed body for the defence of his perſon, and according to the records of the nation, defeated a force that Jehanguir had ſent to puniſh his rebellion. But the vein of incongruous ſtory which runs through the atchievements of this militant prieſt, precludes the derivation of any extenſive hiſtorical uſe. The only paſſage deſerving a ſerious notice, repreſents, that an officer of Jehanguir, named Mahobut Khan, effected the Sicque's ſubmiſſion to the emperor, who ordered him to be impriſoned in the fort of Gualior: but that after a ſhort confinement, he was, at the interceſſion of Mahobut Khan, ſet at liberty. It is not ſeen that Hurrgovind diſturbed the peace of the Moghul government at a future period, but paſſing his days in a recluſe manner, he died about the year 1644, at Khyrutpour, a village in the Punjab. The Sicques conferred the office of prieſthood on Harray, the grandſon of Hurrgovind, though four of their late preceptor's ſons were alive. No other mention is made of Harray, than that he died in the year 1661 at Khyrutpour. At his death, a violent conteſt aroſe for the ſucceſſion, which was claimed by the reſpective adherents of his two ſons,

Ramroy and Hurkiſhen, then in infancy; but not being enabled to adjuſt their claims at home, they appealed to the courts of law at Dehli, where the opponents appeared, and ſet forth their ſeveral pretenſions. The cauſe it is ſaid terminated in a permiſſion being granted to the Sicques to nominate their own prieſt; when, adjuſting the conteſt, they elected Hurkiſhen, who died at Dehli in 1664, a ſhort time after his inveſtiture.

HURKISHEN was ſucceeded by Taigh Bhahauder, his uncle, who appears to have been perſecuted with inveterate animoſity by the adherents of Ramroy, who, ſupported by ſome perſons of influence at the court of Aurungzebe, an order was obtained for the impriſonment of the new prieſt. Taigh Bhahauder, after remaining in confinement at Dehli for the ſpace of two years, was releaſed at the intreaty of Jay Sing, the powerful chief of Jaynaghur, who was at that time proceeding to Bengal on the ſervice of government. The Sicque accompanied his patron to Bengal, whence he returned to the city of Patna, which became his uſual place of abode. The records of the Sicques ſay that Ramroy ſtill maintained a claim to the prieſthood, and that after a long ſeries of virulent perſecution, he accompliſhed the deſtruction of Taigh Bhahauder, who was conveyed to Dehli by an order of Court, and in the year 1675, publickly put to death. The formal execution of a perſon, againſt whom, the Sicques ſay, no criminal charge was exhibited, is ſo repugnant to the character and the actions of Aurungzebe, that we are involuntarily led to charge the Sicques

of

of a wilful misrepresentation of facts, injurious to the memory of the prince, and extravagantly partial to the cause of their priest. No document for the elucidation of this passage appearing in any of the memoirs of Hindostan that have reached my knowledge, I am prevented from discovering the quality of the crime which subjected Taigh Bhahauder to capital punishment.

Govind Sing, then a youth, and the only son of Taigh Bhahauder, was called to the succession by the largest portion of the Sicque's disciples; but the intelligence of his father's death, and dread of a like fate, had induced him to fly from Patna, whence he retired after a series of various adventures into the territory of Siringnaghur. Though Govind Sing could not then have reached his fifteenth year, he evinced many marks of a haughty and turbulent spirit, which was conspicuously shewn in his conduct to the Siringnaghur chief. On pretence of an insult being offered, he collected his party, which amounted it is said to four or five thousand men, and defeated a body of the Siringnaghur troops; but being worsted in some future action, or, according to the authority of the Sicque, obliged by an order of the emperor to leave the country of Siringnaghur, he proceeded with his adherents to the Punjab, where he was hospitably * received by a marauding Hindoo chief of that quarter. Endowed with an

* The dependencies of Mackaval, through which the river Sutledge runs, were given by this Hindoo to Govind Sing, where he founded certain villages.

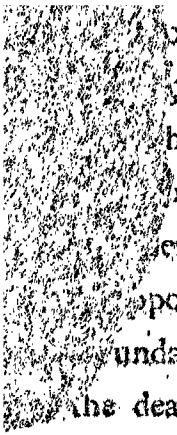
active

active and daring temper, the Sicque aſſiſted his new monarch in various expeditions againſt the bordering landholders, and often in oppoſing the forces of government. The predatory conduct of Govind Sing rendering him obnoxious to the governor of Sirhend, he was attacked and driven from his place of reſidence. Being afterwards diſcovered amongſt the hills in the northern parts of the Sirhend diſtricts, he was ſo vigorouſly preſſed by the imperial troops, that abandoning his family and effects, he was compelled to ſave himſelf by ſpeedy flight. Vizier Khan, the governor of Sirhend, ſullied the reputation he had acquired in this ſervice, by putting to death, in cold blood, the two younger ſons of Govind Sing. A ſevere vengeance was taken for this act at a future period by the Sicques, who giving a looſe to ſavage and indiſcriminate cruelty, maſſacred the Mahometans, of every age and ſex, that fell into their hands. After his late diſaſter, Govind Sing found a ſecure retreat in the Lacky Jungles,* which its natural defence, a ſcarcity of water, and the valour of its inhabitants,† had rendered at that day impregnable. But when the reſentment of government abated, he returned without moleſtation to his former reſidence in the Punjab. The Sicques ſay, he even received marks of favour from Bhahauder Shah, who being appriſed of his military abilities, gave him a charge in the army which

* A woody country, ſituate in the northern part of the Punjab, and famous for a breed of excellent horſes, called the Jungle Tazee.

† The Jatts.

marched



the Decan to oppoſe the rebellion of Rambuchſh.* was aſſaſſinated during this expedition by a Patan, he died of his wounds in 1708, at the town of Nan- but leaving any male iſſue; and a tradition delivered es, limiting their prieſts to the number of ten, induced point no ſucceſſor to Govind Sing. A Sicque diſciple, unda, who had attended Govind Sing to the Decan, came, the death of his chief, into the Punjab; where, claiming a erit from his late connection, he raiſed a ſmall force, and in va- ous deſultory enterprizes, eſtabliſhed the character of a brave but cruel ſoldier. His ſucceſſes at length drew to his ſtandard the whole body of the Sicque nation, which had now widely deviated from the precepts of their founder. A confidence in their ſtrength, rendered preſumptuous by the abſence of the emperor, had made them rapacious and daring, and the late perſecutions, cruel and enthuſiaſtic. Bunda, after diſperſing the parties of the leſſer Mahometan chiefs, attacked the forces of Vizier Khan, the governor of Sirhend, who fell in an action that was fought with an obſtinate valour, but ended in the total defeat of the imperial troops. The Sicques expreſſed an extraordinary joy at this victory, as it enabled them to ſatiate their revenge for the death of the ſons of Govind Sing. The wife of Vizier Khan, with his children, and a

* A brother of Bhahau'er Shah.

† Nandere is ſituate near the banks of the Godavery, about 100 miles to the north-eaſt of Hyderabad.

vaſt

vaſt multitude of the inhabitants of Sirhend were ex
every ſpecies of wild fury. The moſques were overthr
luted, and the dead, torn out of their graves, were ex
beaſts of prey. A party of Sicques had at the ſame tim
the greater Duab, and ſeized on the town and certain
Saharanpour,* where they ſlaughtered the inhabitants, o
made them converts to the new faith. Bunda, who had
acquired the poſſeſſion of an extenſive territory, was now de
by his good fortune. He had croſſed the river Sutledge with an
intention of carrying his conqueſts to the weſtward, but being
encountered by Shems Khan, an imperial officer who commanded
in that quarter, he was repulſed with a great loſs. The Sicques
troops employed in the Duab expedition, had even approached
the vicinity of Dehli, but they were defeated by the forces of the
empire, and driven back to the diſtricts which ſtill remained ſub-
ject to Bunda.

SUCH was the ſituation of the Sicques when Bhahauder Shah
finiſhed the Decan campaign, and returned in the year 1710 to
Hindoſtan. Alarmed at the progreſs, and irritated at the cruelties
they had exerciſed, he marched towards their ſtations with a de-
termination to cruſh the ſect, and revenge the injuries that had
been inflicted on the Mahometan religion. Sultan Rouli Khan,
one of his principal officers, advanced with a diviſion of the army,

† For its ſituation, ſee Rennell's map.

and

and encountering the Sicques on the plains of Sirhend, put them to flight after a bloody conflict; and a party of the fugitives who had taken refuge with Bunda, in a ſtrong poſt, were made priſoners, though not before their chief had eſcaped. The Sicques who ſurvived this diſaſter, though compelled to diſperſe, and their chief to wander about the country in diſguiſe, were not conquered in the reign of Bhahauder Shah. The death * of this prince impeded the ſucceſs of an active purſuit which had been made after the vanquiſhed ſectaries, on whoſe lives a price was ſet in every part of the empire. Conformably to the order of the laſt prieſt, the diſciples of Nanock had permitted the growth of the hair of the head and beard. An edict was therefore iſſued, compelling the Hindoos of every tribe to cut off their hair.

JEHANDAR SHAH,† who ſucceeded to the empire, made a feeble effort to accompliſh the extirpation of the Sicques, but his ſhort reign being involved in an alternate ſeries of debauchery, and tumultuous defence of his country againſt the invaſion of Furruck Sir, this people were encouraged to emerge from their concealment, and again take up the ſword. In the reign of Furruck Sir,‡ the Sicques, who had then collected a large force,§ were vigorouſly attacked by Abdul Sumet Khan, the governor of Lahore, who

* Bhahauder Shah died about the year 1712.

† This Emperor reigned only a few months.

‡ Furruck Sir's reign continued from 1712-3 to 1719.

§ The Sicque forces amounted, it is ſaid, to 25,000 cavalry.

gave them battle near the fort of Loghur,* and gained a deciſive victory. Thoſe who eſcaped took ſhelter with Bunda in Loghur, but being cloſely inveſted, and reduced to extreme diſtreſs from hunger, they ſurrendered at diſcretion.† The captives were conveyed in triumph to Dehli, where being exhibited in an ignominious manner to the inhabitants of the city, they met a deſerved fate, for their ſavage and often unprovoked cruelties. Yet they met it with an undaunted firmneſs, and died amidſt the wondering praiſe of the populace.

HAVING thus briefly related the origin of the Sicques,‡ with a chronological notice of their ten prieſts, and the iſſue of Bunda's attempt to eſtabliſh an independent dominion, I will interrupt the hiſtorical narrative at this period, by a ſummary deſcription of certain domeſtic ordinances eſtabliſhed by Nanock and his ſucceſſors. The perſon deſirous of becoming a member of the Sicque doctrine, is conducted into the preſence of five or more of their people, of any claſs or profeſſion, aſſembled for the occaſion, when one of them pours into the hollow of his hand a little water, which, being touched by the toe of each of the Sicques, the proſelyte ſwallows,

* Situate about one hundred miles to the north-weſt of Lahore.

† This event happened in 1714.

‡ The Sicques affix to their proper name the word *Sing*, which ſignifying a lion in the Sanſcrit language, the appellation of *Sing* belongs properly to the military order. The civil body of the people, artizans, merchants, and all the lower claſſes, being denominated *Sicques*, or diſciples.

previouſly

previous repeating the words "*Wah* gooroojee ka khalsah, wah "gooroojee ka futtah.*" After the performance of this obligation, a cup filled with sherbet is introduced, out of which he drinks five times, and repeats at intervals the afore-mentioned ejaculation. At the conclusion of this ceremony, the convert is instructed in the use of a prayer of great length, in which the religious, moral, and political duties of a Sicque are set forth, and the observance of them enjoined.

The first part of the initiation observed in admitting a proselyte, denotes the equality of the followers of Nanock, and is designed to destroy that fabric of ceremony and form, which the Hindoos are now taught to consider as the essential principle of their religion: but the purpose of the Sicque priests in elevating the new religion on this simple base, has been but partially executed. The military Sicques permit the hair of the head and beard to grow long; they usually fix an iron bracelet on the left hand, and they are prohibited the use of tobacco. These regulations, which were probably instituted by their law-givers to distinguish them from other nations, are now become duties of a primary class, and seem

* These words, compoied of the Arabic and Hindoo languages, convey a benediction on the government of the Sicques, and on the memory of their priests. The Sicques salute each other by the expression *Wah Gooroo*, without any inclination of the body, or motion of the hand. The government at large, and their armies, are denominated *Khalsa* and *Khalsajee*.

almoſt to form the eſſence of their creed.* By a law of Nanock, widows are expreſſly forbidden to deſtroy themſelves at the death of their huſbands, and are permitted to renew the ceremonies of marriage. But ſo ſtrong is yet the adherence of the Sicques who have been converted from the Hindoo tribes, to the ancient cuſtoms of their country, that many of their women are ſeen aſcending the funeral pile; nor are they ever induced to enter a ſecond time into the connubial ſtate. The Sicques, after the manner of the Hindoos, bury their dead; and they oblige the Mahometan converts to adopt the like uſage. They hold a lamentation for the death of any perſon criminal, and equally unjuſt as to be afflicted with grief at the payment of an equitable debt, or the ſurrender of a truſt. Their belief of a future ſtate ſeems to correſpond in moſt of its parts with the metempſychoſis of the Hindoos; and as a ſketch of that ſyſtem has been already given, any further explanation of it is unneceſſary.

The Sicque nation is compoſed of two diſtinct ſects, or orders

* This would appear to be an effect naturally produced in the minds of the bulk of mankind, who eagerly fix their attention and their affections on exterior objects; which having been taught to behold, with ſentiments of reſpect and religious enthuſiaſm they become ſo ſtrongly attached to them, that a portion of temporal welfare, with the hope of future happineſs, ſeems among many nations to depend on a rigorous obſervance of form. A conſpicuous example of this diſpoſition was evinced in the rage which the Ruſſians manifeſted on being obliged by Peter to ſhave their beards. The prince perhaps encountered leſs danger and difficulty in giving a new form and new manners to the empire, than in accompliſhing that change in the perſons of his ſubjects.

of

of people; thoſe who compoſe the moſt ancient one are denominated *Khualaſah*,* and adhere, with little deviation, to the inſtitutions of Nanock, and the eight ſucceeding prieſts; in obedience to which, the Khualaſah ſect are uſually occupied in civil and domeſtic duties. They cut off the hair of their heads and beards, and in their manners and appearance reſemble the ordinary claſſes of the Hindoos.†

THE modern order of the Sicques, entitled *Khalſa*, was founded by Govind Sing, who, deviating from the ordinances of his predeceſſors, imparted a ſtrong military ſpirit to his adherents, whoſe zealous attachment enabled him to indulge the bent of a fierce and turbulent temper, and to give ſcope to an ambition, naturally ariſing from the power which his popularity had created. Govind Sing is ſaid to have reſtricted his ſectaries from the uſe of tobacco, and to have enjoined them to permit the growth of the beard, and the hair of the head. The military diviſion of the people is compoſed of the Khalſa ſect, which, from a native harſhneſs of features and haughtineſs of deportment, is conſpicuouſly diſcriminated from that of the Khualaſah, and other claſſes of the foreign converts.

FOR the ſpace of ſeventy years after the death of Nanock, the

* *Khualaſah* conveys virtually the ſame meaning in the Arabic, as *Khalſah*, which ſignifies *pure, genuine*, &c.

† I have been informed that matrimonial connections are occaſionally formed between the Hindoos, and *Khualaſah* Sicques.

growth

growth of the Sicques was ſlow, and their conduct was regulated by a temperate diſcretion. But when the Moghul empire had received its mortal wound from the commotions which aroſe amongſt the ſons and the grandſons of Aurungzebe; when it was no longer guided by the ſkilful and vigorous hand which had diffuſed wiſdom and ſpirit throughout its vaſt machine, the diſciples of Nanock iſſued into the field, and participated in the varying fortunes of the day. The rebellions of the diſtant provinces, and the factions and intrigues of the court, events which rapidly followed the death of Aurungzebe, gave a powerful aid to the exertions of the Sicques; who improving the favourable occaſion, carried their depredations, even in the reign of Bhahauder Shah, to the environs of the capital. The ſituation * of the country where the doctrine of the Sicques had been the moſt widely promulgated, and where they firſt formed a military body, contributed to augment their power, as well as afford ſhelter againſt a ſuperior force of their enemies. On the ſkirts of foreſts and mountains, impervious to cavalry, they enjoyed alſo the benefits ariſing from the vicinity of an opulent populous territory, which at once afforded a ſtore of converts and plunder.

The Sicque common-wealth acquired an active ſtrength from the ſpirit and valour of Bunda, who had inſpired them with a zeal, which rendered meritorious every act of cruelty to the enemies of

* In the vicinity of the Punjab mountains.

their

their faith, and gave their attacks, until oppoſed by the collected force of the empire, an irreſiſtible impulſe. The ſucceſs of this fierce adventurer, had allured to his ſtandard a numerous body of proſelytes: ſome to obtain a protection againſt the rapacity of the Sicque government, others to take ſhelter from the oppreſſions or juſt demands of the empire: whilſt many embraced the new doctrine, from the hope of participating the plunder of the Punjab. The larger portion of the converts were of the tribe of Jatts * and Goojers; a people who are chiefly ſeen in the northern parts of India. They are eſteemed ſkilful and active huſbandmen, but notorious for a turbulent and reſtleſs temper.

THE defeat and death of Bunda effected a total deſtruction of the power of the Sicques, and, oſtenſibly, an extirpation of their ſect. An edict was iſſued by Furruck Sir, directing that every Sicque falling into the hands of his officers, ſhould on a refuſal of embracing the Mahometan faith, be put to the ſword. A valuable reward was alſo given by the emperor, for the head of every Sicque; and ſuch was the keen ſpirit that animated the perſecution, ſuch the ſucceſs of the exertions, that the name of a Sicque no longer exiſted in the Moghul dominion. Thoſe who ſtill adhered to the tenets of Nanock, either fled into the mountains at the head of the Punjab, or cut off their hair, and exteriorly renounced the profeſſion of their religion.

* The Khalſah Sicques have largely originated from theſe tribes.

AFTER

AFTER a period of more than thirty years, the ſpark that had lain concealed amongſt the ruins of the fabrick of Nanock, burſt forth, and produced a flame which hath never been extinguiſhed. It is mentioned that the Sicque forces appeared in arms at the period of Nadir Shah's return from Dehli;* when the Perſian army, encumbered with ſpoil, and regardleſs of order, was attacked in the rear by detached predatory parties of Sicque cavalry, who occaſionally fell upon the baggage-guards, and acquired a large plunder. During the periods of tumult and diſtreſs, which followed the Perſian,† and the firſt Afghan invaſion, the Sicques emerged more conſpicuouſly from their places of concealment; and collecting a numerous party of promiſcuous adventurers, they ſoon roſe into military importance. Even at the low ebb to which the Sicques had been reduced by the deſtruction of their force, the death of their leader, and the proſcription of their ſect, they had continued to reſort ſecretly to Amrut Sir; and as the attention of the empire became, at ſubſequent periods, fixed on ſubjects that demanded an undivided force, the Sicques were not moleſted in viſiting their favourite place of worſhip, which gradually roſe into the capital of their narrow territory. Meer Munnoo,‡ the governor of Lahore in the reign of Ahmed Shah,§ alarmed at an encreaſe

* 1739.

† From the year 1739 to 1746.

‡ The ſon of Kummer ud Dein, the vizier of Mahomet Shah.

§ This prince ſucceeded to the empire in 1747, and was depoſed in 1753.

encreaſe of power, the evils of which had been already manifeſted by the depredations of the Sicques in his own country, made a vigorous attack on them; and it is ſuppoſed that their force would then have been annihilated, had not this people found a ſtrenuous advocate in his miniſter Korah Mul, who was himſelf of the Khualaſah ſect, and diverted Meer Munnoo from reaping the full fruits of the ſuperiority he had gained.

ADINA BEG KHAN, an officer in the ſervice of Meer Munnoo, had been ſent with an army into the centre of the Sicque diſtricts, which he over-run; and, encountering their army ſome time in the year 1749, had defeated it with great ſlaughter.* A permanent accommodation was ultimately effected through the mediation of Korah Mul, between the Sicques and the governor of Lahore, who being engaged in operations that led to more intereſting objects, the Sicques were left at liberty to acquire ſtrength, and enlarge their territory, which extended from the vicinity of Lahore, to the foot of the mountains. Whilſt Korah Mul lived, his influence over the Sicques confined them to their own limit, and reſtrained their depredations. But the death of this officer, who was ſlain † in an action fought with the Afghans, and the tumult which aroſe at the deceaſe of Munnoo,‡ from the various compe-

* This action was fought near the village of Mackavaul, in the northern diſtricts of the Punjab.

† The death of Koran Mul happened in the year 1751.

‡ Meer Munnoo died in the year 1752.

titors to the government of Lahore, enabled the Sicques to fix the baſis of a power, which, though ſeverely ſhaken at a ſubſequent period, has raiſed them from a lawleſs banditti to the rank of ſovereigns of an extenſive dominion. The charm which had ſo powerfully operated in augmenting and conſolidating the ſpacious empire of the Indian Moghuls, and had in the eaſtern world proclaimed it invincible, was now broken; and a wide theatre was opened, in which every band of bold adventurers had an ample ſcope to exerciſe their courage, and where the moſt alluring objects were held out to the graſp of ambition and avarice. The ſouthern territories had been diſmembered from the empire; and the Perſians and Afghans, the Mahrattas and the Sicques, had ſeverally plundered and laid waſte the northern provinces, and the capital.

AFTER the death of Meer Munnoo, and a rapid ſucceſſion of fleeting governors, the government of Lahore devolved on Adina Beg Khan;* and the court of Dehli, in oppoſition to the arrangements of the Duranny Ahmed Shah, who had annexed the Lahore province to his dominion, avowedly ſupported the power which Adina Beg had aſſumed in the Punjab. The courage and military experience of this officer found an active employment in curbing the turbulent and rapacious ſpirit of the Sicques: but aware of the advantages that would ariſe from a confederacy with a people whoſe

* The officer who defeated the Sicques at the battle of Mackavaul.

depre-

depredations, accompanied with every ſpecies of rapine, could not be prevented without continued warfare, Adina Beg made an alliance with the Sicques, founded on a ſcheme of combined hoſtilities againſt the Afghans, whoſe territories * he invited them to lay waſte, without requiring participation of the booty. Every infringement of the compact being ſeverely reſented by Adina Beg, the Sicques were rarely ſeen interrupting the peace of his government.

The court of Dehli, having by intrigue and occaſional military aids, zealouſly contributed to promote the ſucceſſes of the Lahore chief, Ahmed Shah brought an army in the year 1756 into India, to recover the poſſeſſion of the Punjab, and to puniſh Ghaze-ud-Dien, the miniſter of Alumguir the Second, who had aſſumed an abſolute authority in the capital. Adina Beg, an active ſupporter of the miniſter's intereſts, which were cloſely united with his own, not having a ſufficient force to meet Ahmed Shah Duranny in the field, fled into the adjacent mountains, where he remained in concealment until the departure of the Afghan prince to his northern dominions.

In the year 1757, or 1758, a numerous army of Mahrattas, † after

* The Afghans were at that time poſſeſſed of a tract of country, reaching from the Chinnaun river to the Indus.

† They had been invited into Hindoſtan by Ghaze-ud-Dien, to ſupport an adminiſtration which was deteſted by the people, and oppoſed by a party at court. Had not

after ſubduing the adjacent territory, arrived in the city of Dehli, where their chiefs aſſumed an abſolute ſway. Adina Beg, aware of the benefits of an alliance with the Mahrattas, repreſented to their chiefs, that the Punjab garriſons, weakened by the departure of Ahmed Shah, would fall an eaſy conqueſt to their arms, which he offered to reinforce with his party, and the influence he poſſeſſed in that quarter. The Mahratta army moved without delay into the Punjab, and, expelling the Afghans from Sirhend and Lahore, reduced to their power a tract of country that extended to the river Jaylum.* National commotions calling the principal Mahratta officers into the Decan, they appointed Adina Beg Khan, who had largely promoted their ſucceſs, the governor of Lahore: but he died early in the following year, at an advanced age, highly celebrated in Upper India for his military and political talents.

THE Sicques, awed by the ſuperiour power of the Mahrattas, and fearful of incurring the reſentment of Adina Beg, had not during his government, carried their depredations into the low country. In the courſe of the ſeveral expeditions which the Afghans made into India under Ahmed Shah, they were ſeverely harraſſed by the Sicques, who cut off many of their detached par-

not the arms of Ahmed Shah the Duranny prevailed over the Mahrattas at the battle of Panniſrett, it is probable that the Mahometan power would have been extinguiſhed in India.

* The fifth Punjab river from the eaſtward.

ties

ties, and evinced, in the various ſchemes of annoying the Afghans, an indefatigable intrepidity.

AHMED SHAH, having in conjunction with the Mahometan chiefs of Hindoſtan, routed the combined forces of the Hindoos at the battle of Pannifrett, in the beginning of the year 1761, and driven the Mahrattas from the northern provinces, meditated a full revenge on the Sicques; who, during a ſmall interval of his abſence, had in the latter end of the ſame year, ſeized on the largeſt diviſion of the Lahore province. Early in the year 1762, he entered the Punjab, which he over-run with a numerous army, diſperſing the Sicques wherever they appeared, and diffuſing a general terror by the havock which marked his invaſion. The Afghan ſoon became poſſeſſed of all the low country, and the Sicques diſmayed at his rapid ſucceſs, and the cruelties exerciſed by his fierce ſoldiery, abandoned the plains, and ſought a ſhelter with their families in the ſkirts of the mountains. A large party of Sicques had retired towards the northern diſtricts* of Sirhend, which being more than an hundred miles diſtant from Lahore, the ſtation of the Afghan army, they were not apprehenſive of any immediate attack. But the motions and onſet of Ahmed Shah were equally rapid and dreadful. He fell ſuddenly on this body in February 1762, having marched from Lahore in leſs

* The villages of Goojerwal and Baſſpour, were at that time their common places of refuge.

than

than two days, and cut to pieces, it is ſaid, twenty-five thouſand of their cavalry. The Sicques, in their day of ſucceſs, having defiled and deſtroyed the moſques and other ſacred places of the Mahometans, compelling alſo many of them to embrace the faith of Nanock, now felt the ſavage vengeance of their enemies. Amrut Sir was raſed to the ground, and the ſacred waters choaked up with its ruins. Pyramids were erected, and covered with the heads of ſlaughtered Sicques; and it is mentioned, that Ahmed Shah cauſed the walls of the principal moſques which had been polluted by the Sicques to be waſhed with their blood, that the contamination might be removed, and the ignominy offered to the religion of Mahomet, expiated. Yet theſe examples of ferocious rigour did not quell the native courage of the Sicques, who ſtill continue to iſſue from their faſtneſſes, to hover on the rear of the Afghan armies, and to cut off their ſcattered parties

Ahmed Shah, in the cloſe of the year 1762, returned into Afghaniſtan, which being compoſed of provinces recently conquered or acquired, and inhabited by a warlike fierce people, demanded a vigilant perſonal attention. A body of his troops, commanded by an officer of diſtinguiſhed rank, had been ſtationed in the Lahore territory, and in the capital, which was ſtrongly garriſoned. But ſoon after the march of Ahmed Shah, the Sicques were ſeen deſcending from their various holds on the Punjab, which they rapidly laid waſte, and after ſeveral deſultory actions, in which the Afghans were defeated, they beſieged, and what ſeems extraordinary,

dinary, they took the city of Lahore; where wildly indulging the enmity that had never ceaſed to inflame them againſt theſe ſevere ſcourges of their nation, they committed violent outrages. The moſques that had been rebuilt or reſtored to uſe by the Mahometans, were demoliſhed with every mark of contempt and indignation; and the Afghans, in chains, waſhed the foundations with the blood of hogs. They were alſo compelled to excavate the reſervoir at Amrut Sir, which in the preceding year they had filled up. The Sicques, however, keenly actuated by reſentment, ſet a bound to the impulſe of revenge; and though the Afghan maſſacre and perſecution muſt have been deeply imprinted on their minds, they did not, it is ſaid, deſtroy one priſoner in cold blood.

THE records of the Sicques give a relation of a battle fought with the Afghans, previouſly to the capture of Lahore: but as its aſſerted iſſue does not correſpond with the ſeries of ſucceſs, which conſpicuouſly in India accompanied the Afghan arms under Ahmed Shah, or ſtand ſupported by any collatoral proof to which I have had acceſs, I am neceſſarily led to doubt ſome parts of the Sicque's relation. This event is ſaid to have happened in October 1762, when the collected body of the Sicque nation, amounting to ſixty thouſand cavalry, had formed a junction at the ruins of Amrut Sir, for the purpoſe of performing ſome appointed ceremony, and where they reſolved, expecting the attack, to pledge their national exiſtence on the event of a battle. Ahmed Shah, at that time encamped

camped at Lahore, marched with a ſtrong force to Amrut Sir,* and immediately engaged the Sicques; who, rouſed by the fury of a deſperate revenge, in ſight alſo of the ground ſacred to the founders of their religion, whoſe monuments had been deſtroyed by the enemy they were then to combat, diſplayed, during a bloody conteſt, which laſted from the morning until night, an enthuſiaſtic and fierce courage, which ultimately forced Ahmed Shah to draw off his army and retire with precipitation to Lahore. The Sicques, it is alſo ſaid, purſued the enemy to that city, which they took after a ſhort ſiege; and that Ahmed Shah, having made his eſcape before the ſurrender, croſſed the Indus. Any probability of this event can only be reconciled by a ſuppoſition, that the army of Ahmed Shah had ſuffered ſome extraordinary reductions, previouſly to the period in which this occurrence † is ſaid to have happened. Without a further diſcuſſion of this clouded fact, we will proceed to the common annals of the day, where it is ſeen that the Duranny returned into the Punjab, in the autumn of 1763, when he retook Lahore, and again drove the Sicques from the low country. The ſucceſſes of this prince, though decided at the moment, were not followed by either a benefit to himſelf or to the country he conquered; and could be only traced by ſlaughter and rapine; for in the courſe of the following year, during his

* This place is about forty miles to the weſtward of Lahore.

† A total eclipſe of the ſun is ſaid to have happened on the day of action

ſhort,

ſhort abſence, the Sicques ravaged the Punjab, expelled the Afghan garriſons, and purſued their fortune with ſo vigorous a rapidity, that during the year 1764, they had over-run, and ſeized on, an extent of territory reaching from the borders of the Indus to the diſtricts of Dehli.

AHMED SHAH, in the three following years, continued to maintain a deſultory war with the Sicques; but poſſeſſing no treaſure in India, fearing alſo the effects of a remote reſidence from his native dominion, he muſt have at length ſhrunk from the difficulties of conquering a numerous people, who when driven from the plains, poſſeſſed impenetrable retreats in foreſts and mountains; and, what was more dreadful to their enemies, an invincible courage.

AFTER the year 1767, the period of his laſt campaign in India, Ahmed Shah, ſeems to have wholly relinquiſhed the deſign of ſubduing the Punjab. The Sicques now became the rulers of a large country, in every part of which they eſtabliſhed an undivided authority, and raiſed in it the ſolid ſtructure of a religion, in the propagation and defence of which, their perſevering valour merit a common applauſe.

TIMUR SHAH, the reigning prince of Afghaniſtan, the ſon of Ahmed Shah, had made war on the Sicques with various ſucceſs. During the interval of his laſt campaign in India, he wreſted from them the city, with a large diviſion of the province of Moultan; which the Sicques, contrary to the ſpirit of their national cha-

racter, evacuated after a weak reſiſtance. This ſurrender might on the firſt view be termed puſillanimous, eſpecially when the inactive diſpoſition of Timur is conſidered; but it ſeems to have been a natural conſequence of their eternal diviſions, and the fears entertained by the body at large, of the encreaſe of individual power. The dominions of the Sicques, whoſe limits are ever in a ſtate of fluctuation, was, in the year 1782, bounded on the north by the chain of mountains that extend in an oblique line acroſs the head of the Punjab; on the eaſt by the poſſeſſions of the emperor and his officers, which reach to Pannifrett and Kurrwaul; on the ſouth-eaſt by the Agra diſtricts; on the ſouth by Moultan; and on the weſt by the Indus, except where the town and independencies of Attock, and ſome petty chiefſhips, are interſperſed.

The Sicques have reduced the largeſt portion of the territory of Zabitah Khan, leaving him little more than the fort of Ghous Ghur, with a very limited domain in its vicinity. This chief, the degenerate ſon of Najeb-ud-Dowlah, has made no vigorous effort in his defence; but thinking to ſooth them, and divert their encroachments, aſſumed the name of a Sicque, and oſtenſibly, it is ſaid, became a convert to the faith of Nanock.* It is not ſeen that he derived any benefit from his apoſtacy; for at the period of my journey through the Duab, the Sicques were inveſting his fort,

* Durm Sing, was the name taken by Zabitah Khan. He was ſucceeded by his ſon Gholam Bhahauder, in 1785, who, though an active ſoldier, and reſpected by the Sicques, is not emancipated from their power.

and

and he was reduced to the desperate alternative of calling in a body of their mercenaries to his assistance.

In the beginning of the year 1783, a party of Sicques traversing the Ghous Ghur districts, approached the Ganges, where it forms the western limit of Rohilcund, with an intention of crossing the river, and invading the country of the vizier. Being at that time in Rohilcund, I witnessed the terror and general alarm which prevailed amongst the inhabitants, who, deserting the open country, had retired into forts and places inaccessible to cavalry. The Sicques, perceiving the difficulty of passing a river in the face of the vizier's troops, which were posted on the eastern bank, receded from their purpose. This fact has been adduced to shew that the Sicques command an uninterrupted passage to the Ganges.*

Thus have I laid before you, according to the most substantial authorities that I could obtain, the origin of the Sicques; their first territorial establishment, and the outlines of the progress they made, in extending a spacious dominion, and consolidating the power which they at this day possess. We have seen this people, at two different periods, combating the force of the Moghul empire, and so severely depressed by its superior strength, that the existence of their sect was brought to the edge of annihilation.

* The Sicque forces assembled again in the beginning of the year 1785, when they entered the province of Rohilcund, and having laid it waste, for the space of one hundred miles, they returned unmolested.

The Afghan war involved them in a ſeries of ſtill more grievous calamity; as they had then laid the foundation of a growing power, and more ſenſibly felt the ravages of a formidable foe. They were driven from the ſanctuary of their religion, and perſecuted with a rage which ſeemed to keep pace with the encreaſing ſtrength and inveteracy of their enemy: yet we have ſeen, that in the loweſt ebb of fortune, they retained the ſpirit of reſource; that they boldly ſeized on every hold which offered ſupport; and, by an invincible perſeverance, that they ultimately roſe ſuperior in a conteſt with the moſt potent prince of his age. Grand auxiliary cauſes operated alſo in the formation and final eſtabliſhment of the Sicques' dominion. It hath already been noticed, that the firſt efforts of this people commenced at a time when the Moghul empire loſt its energy and vigour; when inteſtine commotions, the intrigues of a luxurious court, and the defection of diſtant governors, had promoted the increaſe of individual intereſts, and a common relaxation of allegiance.

The deciſive ſuperiority obtained over the Sicques, by Meer Munnoo, would, we muſt believe, with a judicious application of its uſes, have removed to a farther diſtance the rank which this ſtate now maintains in Hindoſtan. To develope the actions of men, with whoſe hiſtory we are trivially acquainted, would be fabricating too refined a ſyſtem of ſpeculation; nor would I now inveſtigate ſo obſcure a ſubject, were it not to generally obſerve, that the preſervation of the Sicques from the effects of Meer Munnoo's

Munnoo's ſucceſs, appears to have been largely promoted by the interference of his miniſter Khorah Mul, who being himſelf a Sicque, naturally became a truſty advocate of the ſect; and who, it is ſaid, completed his aſcendancy over the Mahometan, by a conſiderable donation. But the diſtracted ſtate of Ahmed Shah's Afghan and Perſian dominion, which urgently called on a perſonal adminiſtration, afforded the Sicques the moſt favourable occaſions of accompliſhing the conqueſt of the Punjab; and it is probable, that, had the Afghan prince been enabled to prolong his campaigns in Hindoſtan, the Sicques would not, during his life, have attained any extenſive degree of national conſequence.

I FIND an embarraſſment in applying a diſtinct term to the form of the Sicque government, which, on the firſt view, bears an appearance of ariſtocracy; but a cloſer examination diſcovers a large vein of popular power branching through many of its parts. No honorary or titular diſtinction is conferred on any member * of the ſtate, and the chiefs are treated with a deference that would ſeem to ariſe only from the military charges they may at the inſtant be inveſted with, and from a ſelf-preſerving regard to the ſubordination neceſſarily required in conducting an armed body. Though orders are iſſued in a Sicque army, and a ſpecies of obedience obſerved, puniſhments are rarely inflicted; and the chiefs, who

* The poſterity of the ten prieſts are occaſionally denominated *purgadahs*, that is, deſcendants of a ſaint, or prophet.

often

often command parties of not more than fifty men, being numerous, its motions are tumultuous and irregular. An equality of rank is maintained in their civil ſociety, which no claſs of men, however wealthy or powerful, is ſuffered to break down. At the periods when general councils of the nation were convened, which conſiſted of the army at large, every member had the privilege of delivering his opinion; and the majority, it is ſaid, decided on the ſubject in debate. The Khalſah Sicques, even of the loweſt order, are turbulent people, and poſſeſs a haughtineſs of deportment which, in the common occurrences of life, peculiarly marks their character. Examples of this diſpoſition I have myſelf witneſſed, and one of them I think merits a diſtinct notice. In travelling through the Siringnaghur country, our party was joined by a Sicque horſeman, and being deſirous of procuring his acquaintance, I ſtudiouſly offered him the various attentions which men obſerve to thoſe they court. But the Sicque received my advances with a fixed reſerve and diſdain, giving me, however, no individual cauſe of offence; for his deportment to the other paſſengers was not leſs contemptuous. His anſwer, when I aſked him the name of his chief, was wholly conformable to the obſervations I had made of his nation. He told me (in a tone of voice, and with an expreſſion of countenance, which ſeemed to revolt at the idea of ſervitude) that he diſdained an earthly ſuperiour, and acknowledged no other maſter than his prophet!

The civil and military government of the Sicques, before a common

common intereſt had ceaſed to actuate its operations, was conducted by general and limited aſſemblies, which preſided over the different departments of the ſtate. The grand convention, called in their language *Goorimotta*, was that in which the army met to tranſact the more important affairs of the nation; as the declaration of war or peace, forming alliances, and detaching parties on the ſervice of the year. The amount of the contributions levied on the public account was reported to this aſſembly, and divided among the chiefs, proportionably to the number of their troops. They were at the ſame time obliged to diſtribute a certain ſhare of this property to their ſoldiers, who, on any cauſe of diſſatisfaction, made no heſitation in quitting their ſervice, and following a more popular leader. Subordinate officers were eſtabliſhed for regiſtering the political correſpondence of the ſtate, and for providing warlike ſtores; and the adminiſtration of eccleſiaſtical affairs was entruſted to a certain ſociety of religeuſe, compoſed chiefly of the deſcendants of their original prieſts, but they did not poſſeſs any influence in the temporal regulation of the ſtate. Theſe were the principal ordinances enacted by the firſt chiefs, when the people were united, and a common object governed their public conduct. The dominions of the Sicques, now widely extended, have been ſince divided into numerous ſtates, which purſue an independent intereſt, without a regard to general policy. The grand aſſembly is now rarely ſummoned, nor have the Sicques, ſince the Afghan war, been embarked in any united cauſe.

THEIR

THEIR military force may be ſaid to conſiſt eſſentially of cavalry; for though ſome artillery is maintained, it is awkwardly managed, and its uſes ill underſtood; and their infantry, held in low eſtimation, uſually garriſon the forts, and are employed in the meaner duties of the ſervice. A Sicque horſeman is armed with a matchlock and ſabre of excellent metal, and his horſe is ſtrong and well formed. In this matter I ſpeak from a perſonal knowledge, having in the courſe of my journey ſeen two of their parties, each of which amounted to about two hundred horſemen. They were clothed in white veſts,* and their arms were preſerved in good order: the accoutrements, conſiſting of priming horns and ammunition pouches, were chiefly covered with European ſcarlet cloth, and ornamented with gold lace. The predilection of the Sicques for the match-lock muſquet, and the conſtant uſe they make of it, cauſes a difference in their manner of attack from that of any other Indian cavalry; a party, from forty to fifty, advance in a quick pace to the diſtance of a carabine ſhot from the enemy, and then, that the fire may be given with the greater certainty, the horſes are drawn up, and their pieces diſcharged; when, ſpeedily retiring about a hundred paces, they load and repeat the ſame mode of annoying the enemy. The horſes have been ſo expertly trained to the performance of this operation, that on receiving a ſtroke of

* A long calico gown, having a cloſe body and ſleeves, with a white ſkirt.

the

the hand, they ſtop from a full career. But it is not by this mode of combat that the Sicques have become a formidable people. Their ſucceſſes and conqueſts have largely originated from an activity unparalleled by other Indian nations, from their endurance of exceſſive fatigue, and a keen reſentment of injuries. The perſonal endowments of the Sicques are derived from a temperance of diet, and a forbearance from many of thoſe ſenſual pleaſures which have enervated the Indian Mahometans. A body of their cavalry has been known to make marches of forty or fifty miles, and to continue the exertion for many ſucceſſive days.

The forces of this nation muſt be numerous, though I am not poſſeſſed of any ſubſtantial document for aſcertaining the amount. A Sicque will confidently ſay, that his country can furniſh three hundred thouſand cavalry, and, to authenticate the aſſertion, affirms that every perſon, holding even a ſmall property, is provided with a horſe, match-lock, and ſide-arms. But in qualification of this account, if we admit that the Sicques when united can bring two hundred thouſand horſe into the field, their force in cavalry is greater than that of any other ſtate in Hindoſtan. A paſſage which I extracted from a memoir,* written at Dehli in 1777, exhibits a lively picture of this people in their military capacity. "The Sicques," it repreſents, "are

* I believe it was written by Colonel Polier.

" in general ſtrong and well made; accuſtomed from their infancy
" to the moſt laborious life, and hardeſt fare, they make marches,
" and undergo fatigues that really appear aſtoniſhing. In their
" excurſions they carry no tents or baggage, except, perhaps, a
" ſmall tent for the principal officer: the reſt lodge themſelves
" under blankets, which ſerve them alſo in the cold weather, to
" wrap themſelves in, and which, on a march, cover their ſaddles.
" They have commonly two, ſome of them three, horſes each, of
" the middle ſize, ſtrong, active, and mild tempered. The pro-
" vinces of Lahore and Moultan, noted for a breed of the beſt
" horſes in Hindoſtan, afford them an ample ſupply; and indeed
" they take the greateſt care to encreaſe it by all means in their
" power. Though they make merry on the demiſe of any of their
" brethren, they mourn for the death of a horſe: thus ſhewing
" their love of an animal ſo neceſſary to them in their profeſſional
" capacity. The food of the Sicques is of the coarſeſt kind, and
" ſuch as the pooreſt people in Hindoſtan uſe from neceſſity.
" Bread, baked in aſhes, and ſoaked in a maſh made of different
" ſorts of pulſe, is the beſt diſh, and ſuch as they never indulge
" in but when at full leiſure; otherwiſe, vetches and tares, haſtily
" parched, is all they care for. They abhor ſmoaking tobacco,
" for what reaſon I cannot diſcover; but intoxicate themſelves
" freely with ſpirits of their own country manufacture. A cup
" of the laſt they never fail taking after a fatigue at night. Their
" dreſs is extremely ſcanty: a pair of long blue drawers, and a

" kind

"kind of checkered plaid, a part of which is faſtened round the "waiſt, and the other thrown over the ſhoulder, with a mean "turban, form their clothing and equipage. The chiefs are diſ-"tinguiſhed by wearing ſome heavy gold bracelets on their wriſts, "and ſometimes a chain of the ſame metal bound round their "turbans, and by being mounted on better horſes: otherwiſe, no "diſtinction appears amongſt them. The chiefs are numerous, "ſome of whom have the command of ten or twelve thouſand ca-"valry; but this power is confined to a ſmall number, the in-"ferior officers maintaining from one to two thouſand, and many "not more than twenty or thirty horſes; a certain quota of which "is furniſhed by the chief, the greater part being the individual "property of the horſemen."

FROM the ſpirit of independence ſo invariably infuſed amongſt them, their mutual jealouſy, and a rapacious roving temper, the Sicques at this day are ſeldom ſeen co-operating in national concert, but actuated by the influence of an individual ambition, or private diſtruſt, they purſue ſuch plans only as coincide with theſe motives. An example of their forces being engaged in oppoſite intereſts, has been noticed in the caſe of Mhah Sing, who ſuccoured the Rajah of Jumbo, againſt the Sicque party, which had invaded his country. Before the chiefs of the Mountaineers country, at the head of the Punjab, were reduced to a tributary ſtate, ſevere depredations were committed on them by the Sicques, who plundered and deſtroyed their habitations, carried off the cattle, and, if

ſtrong and well formed, the male children, who were made converts to the faith of Nanock. But ſince the payment of a fixed tribute has been ſtipulated, which does not amount to more than five per cent. on the revenue, the Mountaineers are little molested except when the Sicques have been called in to adjuſt their domeſtic quarrels.

The extenſive and fertile territory of the Sicques, and their attachment and application in the midſt of warfare to the occupations of agriculture, muſt evidently produce a large revenue. The diſtricts dependant on Lahore in the reign of Aurungzebe, produced, according to Mr. Bernier, a revenue of two hundred and forty-ſix lacks and ninety-five thouſand rupees;* and we are naturally led to ſuppoſe, from the induſtrious ſkill of the Sicques in the various branches of cultivation, that no great decreaſe of that amount can have taken place ſince the Punjab has fallen into their poſſeſſion.

An extenſive and valuable commerce is alſo maintained in their country, which has been extended to diſtant quarters of India; particularly to the provinces of Bengal and Bahar, where many Sicque merchants of opulence at this time reſide. The Omichund who took ſo active, though unfortunate, a ſhare in the revolution, which the Engliſh effected in Bengal, was a Sicque; as

* Two millions four hundred and ſixty-nine thouſand five hundred pounds ſterling, at two ſhillings for the rupee.

is his adopted ſon, who is now an inhabitant of Calcutta. Merchants of every nation or ſect, who may introduce a traffick into their territories, or are eſtabliſhed under their government, expect a full protection, and enjoy commercial privileges in common with their own ſubjects. At the ſame time it muſt be noticed, that ſuch immunities are granted only to thoſe who remain amongſt them, or import wares for the immediate ſupply of the Sicque markets. But the foreign traders, or even travellers, who attempt to paſs through the Punjab, are often plundered, and uſually ill-treated. In the event of no moleſtation being offered to people of this deſcription, the eſcape is ever ſpoken of with a degree of joyful ſurprize, and a thankſgiving is offered to Providence for the ſingular eſcape. This conduct, inimical to the progreſs of civilization, and an impediment to the influx of wealth, proceeds from an extreme jealouſy of ſtrangers, added to a rapacity of temper, which make them averſe to the encouragement of any ſcheme in whoſe ſucceſs they do not immediately participate.

The Sicques are not rigorous in their ſtipulations with the Mahometan proſelytes, who, if they abſtain from beef's fleſh, (which is held in equal abhorrence by the Sicques as by the Hindoos), and perform the more oſtenſible duties, as burning their dead, and preſerving the hair of the head, an indulgent latitude is granted in all the other articles of the creed of Nanock. The Mahometans who reſide in the Punjab are ſubject to occaſional oppreſſion, and often to the inſult of the lower claſſes of the people; among

among whom it is not an uncommon practice to defile the places of worſhip, by throwing in the carcaſes of hogs and other things held impure by the Muſſelman law. The Mahometans are alſo prohibited from announcing their ſtated times of prayer, which, conformably to their uſage, is proclaimed in a loud tone of voice. A Sicque who in the chace ſhall have ſlain a wild hog, is frequently known to compel the firſt Mahometan he meets to carry to his home the body of the animal; and, on being initiated into the rites of their religion, the Sicques will ſometimes require a Mahometan convert to bind on his arm the tuſk of a boar, that by this act of national impurity, he may the more avowedly teſtify a renunciation and contempt of the tenets of his former faith. Theſe facts will ſufficiently mark the haughty and inſulting demeanor, which, with few deviations, forms a prominent feature in the character of the military Sicques; but we may alſo aſcribe a certain portion of their ſevere and contumelious treatment of the Mahometans, to a remembrance of recent injuries.

The diſcordant intereſts which agitate the Sicque nation, and the conſtitutional genius of the people, muſt incapacitate them, during the exiſtence of theſe cauſes, from becoming a formidable offenſive power; nor are they inveſted with that ſpecies of executive ſtrength which is neceſſary to advance and eſtabliſh a diſtant conqueſt. In the defence and recovery of their country, the Sicques diſplayed a courage of the moſt obſtinate kind, and manifeſted a perſeverance, under the preſſure of calamities, which bear

an

an ample teſtimony of native reſource, when the common danger had rouſed them to action, and gave but one impulſe to their ſpirit. Should any future cauſe call forth the combined efforts of the Sicques to maintain the exiſtence of empire and religion, we may ſee ſome ambitious chief led on by his genius and ſucceſs, and, abſorbing the power of his aſſociates, diſplay, from the ruins of their commonwealth, the ſtandard of monarchy. The page of hiſtory is filled with the like effects, ſpringing from the like cauſes. Under ſuch a form of government, I have little heſitation in ſaying, that the Sicques would be ſoon advanced to the firſt rank amongſt the native princes of Hindoſtan; and would become a terror to the ſurrounding ſtates.*

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

* Mhadgee Scindia, a Mahratta chief, by ſeizing the relics of the Imperial authority and domain, has placed himſelf in the ſituation which the Sicques muſt have been deſirous of occupying. This reſolution will naturally create a national enmity, perhaps a conteſt, between the northern branch of the Mahratta empire, and the Sicques.

LET-

LETTER XII.

Kaſhmire, April, 1783.

DEAR SIR,

ON the 17th of April, I left Jumbo; and, accompanied by a Kaſhmiriah ſervant, who carried my baggage, I reached the ſmall village of Dunſhaulah, after a painful journey on foot, of ten coſſes. A review of my feet, too plainly ſhewed that they had not been proof againſt the ſteep and rocky roads I had clambered over; indeed they had ſuffered ſo ſeverely by bruiſes and excoriations, that I could ſcarcely walk.

HAVING bound up my feet with bandages ſoaked in oil, I reached, on the 18th, though with difficulty, the village of Nagrolah—five coſſes. During theſe two laſt days, I paid, at the different cuſtom-houſes, certain ſmall fees of office, which were not authorized charges; but being known to be a ſtranger, and apparently in a condition to ſatisfy the demand, I was ſeldom permitted to paſs a cuſtom-houſe unmoleſted. Though the lacerations in my feet gave me much pain, eſpecially at the firſt ſetting off, I purſued my journey in good ſpirits, being pro-

tected by the quiet diſpoſition of the people, and ſure of procuring a good meal in the evenings, with commodious lodging. The firſt night, we were received into a retail ſhop, at Dunſhaulah, where I ſlept on my large blanket, and ſupped on ſome ſpiced meat and biſcuits, which my Jumbo hoſt had provided: and at Nagrolah we were accommodated by a Mahometan family, who ſupplied me with a ſtanding bed.

On the 19th, at Luttere—eight coſſes. The latter part of the journey led me up a high and ſteep hill, and the ſun, then at its meridian height, had nearly overpowered me; when, on a ſudden, I found myſelf on a ſummit, where ſome charitable Hindoo had erected a ſmall, but a cool, building,* plentifully ſupplied with pots of water. Under this hoſpitable ſhade, I was permitted, though a Mahometan, to reſt during the day, and to ſleep at night. Many Hindoos came in for the benefit of the water and ſhade, and obſerving that I was lame, they treated me with an attentive kindneſs, and diſpenſed with my riſing when any of their principal people entered.

In the number of thoſe who came to partake of the charitable uſes of this houſe, was a Mahometan, who ejaculating his *Biſmillah*,† laid himſelf down, without farther ceremony, in the interior quarter of the apartment. A Hindoo of rank, accom-

* Called, in the language of the country, *Durmſallen*, which ſignifies "A charitable foundation."

† An Arabick compound word, ſignifying "In the name of God."

panied

panied by ſeveral attendants, entered ſoon after, and obſerving that the mendicant had occupied the moſt convenient, as well as honorary place, and that he offered no mark of attention or reſpect, the Hindoo ordered that his chattles, which were heavy, ſhould be thrown into the road. On exclaiming againſt this act of ejection, he was told, that though the houſe was erected for the purpoſe of common accomodation, with no view of excluding any nation or ſect; yet in ſome caſes, as in the preſent, an obſervance of precedency and deference was neceſſary. This anecdote will ſerve to generally delineate the native difference betwixt the temper of a Hindoo and a Mahometan. What do you think would have been the reception of a Hindoo, particularly of a religious order, had he come into a karavanſerah, in a Mahometan country, and throw his braſs pot, his rice, or peaſe, into an apartment which Mahometans had previouſly occupied? Could the Hindoo have acted with ſuch indiſcretion—his puniſhment would have been more diſgraceful and ſevere than death. From long obſervation, I can with confidence ſay, that the Hindoos are a more temperate people, and much more uſeful in the various relations of life, than any claſs of Mahometans that have come within my knowledge.

At the vicinity of Nagrolah commence the diſtricts of the Chinnanee chief, a dependant on Jumbo, who poſſeſſes a revenue of about a lack of rupees. This chief does not remit any tribute to his ſuperior, but aſſiſts his government with a quota of troops

in the event of exigency; and comformably to this tenure he now ſerves in the campaign againſt the Sicques.

On the 20th, at Chinnanee; a neat and populous town, ſituate on the brow of a hill; at the foot of which, on the eaſtern ſide, runs a rapid ſtream paſſing to the left. This channel is paſſed by means of two ſtout fir beams, one of which reaches from the ſhore to an inſulated rock in the centre of the current, on which it is faſtened by wooden ſtakes; and the other extends from the rock to the oppoſite bank. The velocity with which the water was precipitated, its roaring noiſe, and the narrow ſhaking bridge, gave full occaſion for the uſe of my eye, and the ſteadineſs of my head. At Chinnance, I was taxed in the ſum of a rupee for permiſſion to croſs the river Chinnaun, which forms the weſtern limit of this chiefſhip.

On the 21ſt, at Dumomunjee — ſeven coſſes. A few ſcattered houſes, in one of which I was accommodated by a Kaſhmirian family, who had taken a farm in that quarter. The approach to this village leads through a valley, covered with luxuriant herbage, and interſperſed with ſome of the moſt beautiful ſhrubs I ever ſaw. From Jumbo hither, the road tended, as nearly as I could aſcertain, to the eaſt and eaſt-by-ſouth; but from the vicinity of Dumomunjee it leads to the north and north-by-weſt.*

On

* My ſervant informed me that robberies are often committed in theſe parts, by the inhabitants of an adjacent diſtrict; and to avoid which, travellers have been induced to make

On the 22d, at Naufman — nine coſſes: a ſmall village in the Kiſhtewer country; the only independant Hindoo territory I have yet ſeen in India. This day croſſed the Chinnaun, uſually denominated at this place, from the mode of croſſing it, the Chickah. The manner of conveying paſſengers and all ſorts of property over this ſtream is curious, and deſerves explanation. The Chinnaun is about ſeventy or eighty yards broad, and, like the rivers of this part of India, from the declivity of the country, very rapid. On the oppoſite banks are fixed ſtrong wooden poſts, of about four feet in height, on the upper ends of which a ſtout rope is tightly extended, and is joined below to a ſmaller one, by hoops of twiſted oſiers. — In the centre of the ſmall rope, to which only the hoops are firmly attached, hangs a vehicle of net-work, for the conveyance of merchandiſe and paſſengers, which is ſupported from the main rope by a wooden ſlider, in the form and ſize of a bullock's yoke, to whoſe ends the vehicle is faſtened; and a ſufficient length of both ends of the ſmall rope permits it to be landed on either ſide of the river. It appears that the ſeat, or as it is termed in this county, the Chickah, is by mutual agreement kept on the Kiſhtewer ſide, during the night. In defiance of my paſsport, the officer at the Chinnance limit, taxed me in an additional fee; and I was alſo compelled to buy my way through an inferior tribe of

make a deviation from the more direct track. But I apprehend that the abrupt ſteepneſs of ſome of the ranges of mountains in this quarter, has cauſed this oblique direction.

harpies,

harpies, who infeſted the water ſide. Anxious to arrive at the end of the ſtage, being both hungry and tired, I endeavoured to pacify their clamours; but other demands were yet againſt me: for this extraordinary race of ferrymen, having conveyed my ſervant and our little baggage over half of the river, kept them ſwinging there, and declared that they ſhould be detained until a ſecond payment was made. Though this impediment materially affected me, I could not reſiſt laughing at the aukward poſition of the unfortunate domeſtic, who bawled out to me, from his ſlack rope, that they were a pack of hardened rogues, and that he would rather be kept hanging all night, than conſent to give them a farthing more. But the neceſſities of my ſituation cooled my reſentment, and obliged me to purchaſe his releaſe.

At Nauſman, I waited on a Mahometan of ſome diſtinction, who was travelling into Kaſhmire, and I requeſted permiſſion to travel in his ſuite, that I might with more ſucceſs, I informed him, repel the dreaded attack of the cuſtom-houſe officers; who, ſince my departure from Jumbo, had extorted a larger ſum than was proportioned to the ſtate of my finances. At the diſtance of every ten or twelve miles from Jumbo to the Chinnaun river, one of theſe petty tyrants takes his ſtand; and on the payment of a ſtipulated ſum to the government, collects the public duties, as well as enforces every ſpecies of private exaction; and ſuch taxes have become the more grievous to the merchant, by their being equally levied on the tranſportation of goods through a diſtrict, as at the

actual

actual place of ſale. From Kaſhmire to Lucknow are not leſs than thirty ſtations at which a duty of three and four per cent. is levied on every quality of merchandize: this charge, with the expences neceſſarily incurred in the courſe of a tedious and diſtant land-conveyance, largely enhances the price of ſhauls in the lower part of India. Zulphucar Khan, the perſon whom I had addreſſed, readily offered me aſſiſtance, and admitted me, without reſerve, into his party. This Khan had lately ſerved the chief of Jumbo, and had been employed in the management of a diſtrict which that chief holds in Kaſhmire. But on the charge of ſome default the Mahometan was recalled; and, after undergoing a rigorous confinement, as well as ſevere tortures, the effect of which had deſtroyed his right hand, he was permitted to retire into Kaſhmire, where his family now reſides.

On the 23d, we proceeded, ſix coſſes, and halted on the ſummit of a ſteep and uninhabited mountain: the air, in itſelf bleak, was made painfully cold by the fall of a heavy rain, which did not ceaſe during the night. It were almoſt ſuperfluous to ſay, that the perſon who makes this journey ſhould poſſeſs a ſtrong and vigorous conſtitution, and he ſhould alſo endeavour to cordially wean himſelf from the deſire of every luxury.

On the 24th, at Hullweiggin, a village compoſed of detached hamlets—five coſſes. The journey of this day conſiſted wholly of clambering over hills, and I may add, rolling down them. The protection of the Khan was conſpicuouſly manifeſted at this cuſtom-

tom-houſe, where I only paid one quarter of a rupee; and being now conſidered an eſtabliſhed member of his family, I was treated at our places of halt with much civility. All the cuſtom-houſes on the north ſide of the Chinnaun, are in the hands of Kaſhmirians, who have found in the Hindoo diſtricts a ſafe and profitable retreat from the oppreſſions of their own government. The inhabitants of Kiſhtewer are Hindoos, though the chief is a Mahometan; but we may ſuppoſe no very rigid one; for either he or his father, became a convert, to effect ſome purpoſe with the governor of Kaſhmire.

On the 25th, at Bannaul—ſeven coſſes. A ſmall village, dependant on Kaſhmire; where we were accommodated in a moſque,* the common lodging of Mahometan travellers, in places not ſupplied with karavanſerahs. Much hail and rain having fallen this day, the path, a winding and narrow one, became ſo ſlippery, that our progreſs was very ſlow; and my ſhoes, which were purchaſed at Jumbo, now evinced ſo many wide marks of diſſolution, that I was obliged to tye them to my feet with cords. At the diſtance of three coſſes to the ſouth-eaſt of the village of Bannaul, we paſſed the boundary of a diviſion of the Kaſhmire territory, lying without the greater circle of mountains. The governors of Kaſhmire permit the fertile valley of Bannaul, of ten or twelve miles in length, to remain uncultivated, that it may not

* It was ſmall, and built of wood.

afford

afford ſhelter or proviſion to the bordering Hindoo ſtates; who, in former periods, have, through this tract, approached the interior paſſes of Kaſhmire.

On the 26th, at the town of Durroo, or Surroo, a ſtation—ſeven coſſes. The firſt part of this road leads over a mountain, whoſe aſcent is computed, in a winding direction, at ſix miles. On the ſummit, then covered with ſnow, except where a ſtream of water intervenes, are ſeen the plains of Kaſhmire, extending, in a long range, from the ſouth-eaſt to the north-weſt, and exhibiting a beautiful diverſity of landſcape. The view, long a rare one to me, was highly grateful, and excited a train of pleaſing ideas, which the ſucceſsful progreſs of my journey contributed to heighten, and which I continued to indulge, until the extreme chillneſs of the air compelled me to deſcend into a warmer climate.

Having now brought you to a near view of this land of pleaſure, I am urged, that the deſcription may be more explanatory, to call back your attention to the country and people I have lately viſited. —From Lall Dong to the Ganges, the face of the country forms a cloſe chain of woody mountains, and did not one or two miſerable hamlets feebly interpoſe, you would pronounce that diviſion of Sirmaghur fitted only for the habitation of the beaſts of the foreſt. Elephants abound there, in numerous herds; but are not to be ſeen, it is ſaid, on the weſt ſide of the Jumna. In the vicinity of Nhan, the country is interſperſed with low hills, and frequently opens into extenſive vallies; which having, perhaps, ever lain waſte,

are overgrown with low wood. From thence to Bellaſpour, the ſcene is changed into piles of lofty mountains, whoſe narrow breaks barely ſerve to diſcharge the deſcending ſtreams. From Bellaſpour, fertile vallies, though not wide, extend to Biſſouly, where the country is again covered with high hills, which, with little variation, ſtretch to the limits of Kaſhmire. The boundaries of Kiſhtewer, except to the place of my entrance and departure, are not ſpecified; nor is the amount of the revenues; an omiſſion cauſed by my inability to procure any ſubſtantial authority. The road from Lall Dong to Kaſhmire, as accurately as could be aſcertained, from an obſervation of the ſun's courſe, tended generally to the north-weſt, weſt-north-weſt, and weſt by north; except where the deviation is otherwiſe noted. The ſides of the inhabited mountains produce wheat, barley, and a variety of the ſmall grains peculiar to India. The cultivated ſpaces project from the body of the hill, in ſeparate flats, in the form of a range of ſemicircular ſtairs: with a broad baſe and a narrow ſummit. The ground, which is ſtrong and productive, has been propelled, it ſhould ſeem, into theſe projections by the action of the rains, which fall among theſe mountains with great violence, from June till October; and is now preſerved in this divided and level ſtate by buttreſſes of looſe ſtones, which bind in the edge of every flat. Rice is alſo cultivated in the narrow vallies, but not in a great quantity; nor is it the uſual food of the inhabitants, who chiefly ſubſiſt on wheat, bread, and peaſe made into a thick ſoup. From Nhan, the northern ſides of the

hills

hills produce the fir,* in great plenty; and in the country between Jumbo and Kaſhmire, are ſeen many pines, but I obſerved they only grew on the north face of the mountains. I have frequently eat my meal under the ſhade of a ſpreading willow, which here, as in Europe, delights in hanging over a ſtream. The climate is not favourable to fruits and vegetables, being too hot for the Perſian products, and not ſufficiently warm to mature thoſe of India: though the white mulberry muſt be excepted, which, at Jumbo, is of a large ſize, and of an exquiſite flavour. The villages of the Mountaineers, or rather their hamlets, ſtand generally on the brow of a hill, and conſiſt of from four to ſix or eight ſmall ſcattered houſes; which are built of rough ſtones, laid in a clay loam, and uſually flat roofed: I have alſo ſeen, though not often, ſloping roofs of wood. The reſinous parts of the fir, cut in ſlips, ſupply the common uſes of the lamp, in all the places where that tree abounds; but the method of extracting its turpentine, or tar, does not ſeem to be known. The natives of theſe mountains are compoſed of the different claſſes of Hindoos, and little other difference of manners exiſts between them and thoſe of the ſouthern quarters of India than is ſeen amongſt a people who occupy the high and low lands of the ſame country. The ſcarcity of wealth, by depreſſing the growth of luxury, has given them a rude ſimplicity of character,

* That ſpecies of it called the Scots fir.

and has impeded the general advancement of civilization. They have no ſpacious buildings for private or public uſe, nor in the performance of religious offices do they obſerve thoſe minuter or refined ceremonies that are practiſed by the ſouthern Hindoos.

At Taullah Mhokee* a ſmall volcanic fire iſſues from the ſide of a mountain, on which the Hindoos have raiſed a temple that has long been of celebrity and favorite reſort among the people of the Punjab. Fire being the pureſt of the elements, the Hindoos conſider it, as did moſt of the ancient Aſiatic nations, the fitteſt emblem to repreſent the Deity. All places which produce a ſubterraneous flame are held ſacred by the Hindoos, who do not permit any image to be placed near it; believing that other ſymbols would tend to ſully the purity of this repreſentation: and I have often noticed, that thoſe Hindoos who are the moſt converſant in the rites of their religion, never omitted, at the firſt ſight of fire in the courſe of the day, to offer up a prayer of adoration. The Mountaineers invariably preſerved the beard, and inſtead of bowing the head in ſalutation, as in Lower India, they embrace the party addreſſed, and incline the head over his left ſhoulder. The growth of the beard is encouraged, perhaps, from a certain ferocity of diſpoſition incident to their ſituation, and generally predominant in

* This word ſignifies "The mouth of the flame." The place is ſituate eight or nine miles to the northward of Nadone, the principal town in the Kangrah country.

the

the diſpoſition of Mountaineers, which prompts them, in different modes, to ſhew a diſdain and contempt for the ſofter manners of the natives of the low country.*

The women have the olive complexion, are delicately ſhaped, and evince a freedom in their manner, which, without a tendency to immodeſty, or connected with the habits of licentiouſneſs, ſeems the reſult of the common confidence repoſed in them by the men: I have ſeen a woman ſtop, though carrying a pot of water, and converſe unreſervedly with paſſengers; giving them an information of the road, or any other ordinary intelligence. Their dreſs conſiſts of a petticoat, with a border, uſually of different colours; a cloſe jacket, covering half of the waiſt, and a looſe ſtomacher to the fore part of it, which reaches to the girdle. Their hair, which they hold in as high an eſtimation as that beautiful appendage can be regarded by the gayeſt females of Europe, is plaited with black ſilk, or cotton ſtrings, and falls down the back; over which they throw, in a graceful faſhion, a veil, which ſeldom touches, and never wholly conceals, the face. The women of the principal peo-

* A ſwelling of the exterior part of the throat, which is aſcribed to the noxious quality of the water, prevails among the Mountaineers. As the ſame complaint, proceeding, probably, from the like cauſe, is incident to certain inhabitants of the Alps and other mountainous countries in Europe, the origin of it has, doubtleſs, been ſcientifically inveſtigated and explained. I will, therefore, only obſerve, that the water iſſuing from theſe mountains is impregnated, from the large mixture of ſnow, with a crude and cold quality; and may have acquired its alledged pernicious property from being confined in channels, which the ſhade of the woods and the height of the hills preclude from a free circulation of air and the rays of the ſun.

ple,

ple, in the manner of the Mahometans, are kept in private apartments: this practice, exiſting in a country * where little danger is apprehended from foreign intruſion, affords a belief, that the concealment of the higher ranks of women has been an eſtabliſhed cuſtom of the Hindoos, previouſly to the date of the Mahometan conqueſt of India. It was once my opinion, that the Hindoos had ſecluded them from the public view that they might not be expoſed to the intemperance of the Mahometan conquerors; but after perceiving the uſage adopted amongſt the ſequeſtered Mountaineers, and alſo amongſt the various independent Mahratta ſtates, I am induced to think that the excluſion of women from ſociety, prevailed in India before the period of the Afghan or Tartar invaſions. At the ſame time, were a concluſion to be drawn from certain cuſtoms of the Hindoos, now obſolete, but noticed in their hiſtory, I would ſay, that they did not, in more ancient times, confine any claſs of their women; but, as their manners, from the influx of wealth, and conſequent luxury, became leſs ſimple, that the princes and nobles of the country produced the innovation from a deſire of impreſſing the populace with a greater reſpect for their families. The ſtory of the incarnations of Vyſtnow, and other ancient legends, ſhews that the Hindoo women were admitted into the aſſembly of men, and often poſſeſſed an extenſive ſway. In the hiſtory of their celebrated Ram, who appears to have been a powerful

* Mountainous and difficult of access to a hostile nation.

ſoldier,

ſoldier, is ſeen a paſſage which ſerves to illuſtrate this poſition, and to trace alſo, to a high ſource, a mode of tryal formerly eſtabliſhed in Europe.

It is neceſſary to inform you, that Sree Mun Narrain, the Supreme Deity of the Hindoos, together with his indiviſible aſſociates, Mhah Letchimy, and the Snake, for the purpoſe of correcting certain evils which had at that time deranged our terreſtrial world, found it expedient to perſonify human creatures: Narrain aſſumed the form of Ram, a renowned ſoldier; Letchimy became his wife, under the name of Seetah Devee; and the Snake was transformed into the body of Letchimun, the brother and companion of Ram. It is ſeen that theſe perſonages mixed freely in the ſocieties of the world, nor does any part of the hiſtory notice the retirement of Seetah: ſhe is, indeed, repreſented coming forth on every occaſion which could, with propriety, permit the interference of her ſex. A ſervice of importance calling upon Ram's individual exertion, he conſigned Seetah to the charge of Letchimun: the lady and her guardian remained ſome time in ſecurity and quiet; when a famed magician, inſtigated no doubt, by the devil, who is ever on the watch to draw aſtray mortals, particularly the female diviſion of them, came that way, ſaw Seetah, and became violently enamoured. This ſubtle man, having diſcovered, it is ſuppoſed by his ſpells and incantations, that the eyes of women are the ſooneſt enſnared, let fly, full in the ſight of Seetah, a bird of brilliant and beautiful plumage. This artifice had the moſt powerful effect; for the deluded

luded fair one inſtantly conjured Letchimun, by every pledge he held dear, by the affection he bore to her, by his friendſhip for Ram, to procure for her the charming bird. Letchimun, amazed and much troubled at this entreaty, endeavoured to deſcribe the eminent danger of quitting her in ſo perilous a ſituation, his dread of Ram's diſpleaſure for the deſertion of ſo grand a truſt: in ſhort, he urged every argument which a regard for his own character or her ſafety could ſuggeſt. The dazzling hues of the bird had ſo amply filled the mind of Seetah, that no ſpace remained for the counſel of Letchimun; ſhe muſt poſſeſs this charming object of her wiſhes, or become the moſt miſerable of women. On the repeated denial of Letchimun to gratify ſo dangerous a requeſt, blinded by the diſappointment of her hopes, and impelled by a paroxyſm of rage, ſhe accuſed him of the deſign of ſeduction, which ſhe alledged to be the reaſon of his refuſal to leave her. Letchimun, now convinced of the inefficacy of argument, and the neceſſity of acquieſcence, went in queſt of the bird; but previouſly to his departure he drew a magic circle around the ſpot where Seetah ſtood, and told her, that within that ſpace no calamity could enter. Letchimun had no ſooner gone, than the plotting necromancer, aſſuming the appearance of an old man, approached, with a feeble and decrepid ſtep, the place where Seetah ſtood, and, through an apparent exceſs of weakneſs, extended himſelf on the ground. He beſought her, in a piteous tone of voice, for a little water to allay his thirſt, and reſtore his exhauſted ſtrength. The humane, but ill-

ill-fated, Seetah, felt the force of the old man's prayer, and, with a bosom overflowing with benevolence, she stepped, unmindful of her safety, beyond the prescribed bounds, and fell that instant into the power of her betrayer. Here the story wanders into a wilder field of fable; where I should reap little credit, or you improvement. I will, therefore, content myself with mentioning, that after Ram had recovered Seetah, he ordered, for the removal of certain suspicions which had crept into his own breast, and for effectually shutting the mouth of slander, which began to open, that she should be judged by the ordeal trial. Seetah, eager to banish every doubt from the mind of her lord, and to exhibit to the world a public test of her purity, joyfully heard the mandate; and, without shew of dread, walked over the burning iron. But the feet of Seetah, says the story, "being shod with innocence, the "scorching heat was to her a bed of flowers."

PARDON me for the intrusion of this Eastern tale, which might justly be deemed a trifling one, did it not indicate that the women of rank, among the more ancient Hindoos, were not excluded from the public eye, and that this people were acquainted with the trial by fire at an early period of time. The same uses may be derived from this story as are contained in the Arabian Nights; where, amidst the [illegible] of talisman, [illegible] devils, we are enabled to extract just relations of the [illegible] dispositions of the people.

As I have thus far enter[illegible] which has occasionally engaged my attention, I will proc[illegible] farther, and recite a

circumſtance which may corroborate the poſition, that Hindoo women of diſtinction, by ancient as well as exiſting uſage, were not debarred the ſight of men. When a female of the chittery, or royal race, was marriageable, or ſuppoſed to poſſeſs a diſcriminating choice, ſhe was conducted to an apartment where many youths of her own tribe were aſſembled; and, being deſired to ſelect from them her future huſband, ſhe diſtinguiſhed the object of her partiality by throwing over his neck a wreath of flowers.*

THESE deſultory opinions are freely given, and I am to intreat you will as freely review them; receiving ſuch as may ſtand on principles of reaſon, and rejecting, without a ſcruple, thoſe that ſeem vague or fanciful.

I am,

Dear Sir

Your's, &

* This cuſtom, I am informed, has been obſerved within theſe late years at Tanjore.

END OF VOL. I.

00033071

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016